"The Operators' Choice"

PLAYMETER Magazine

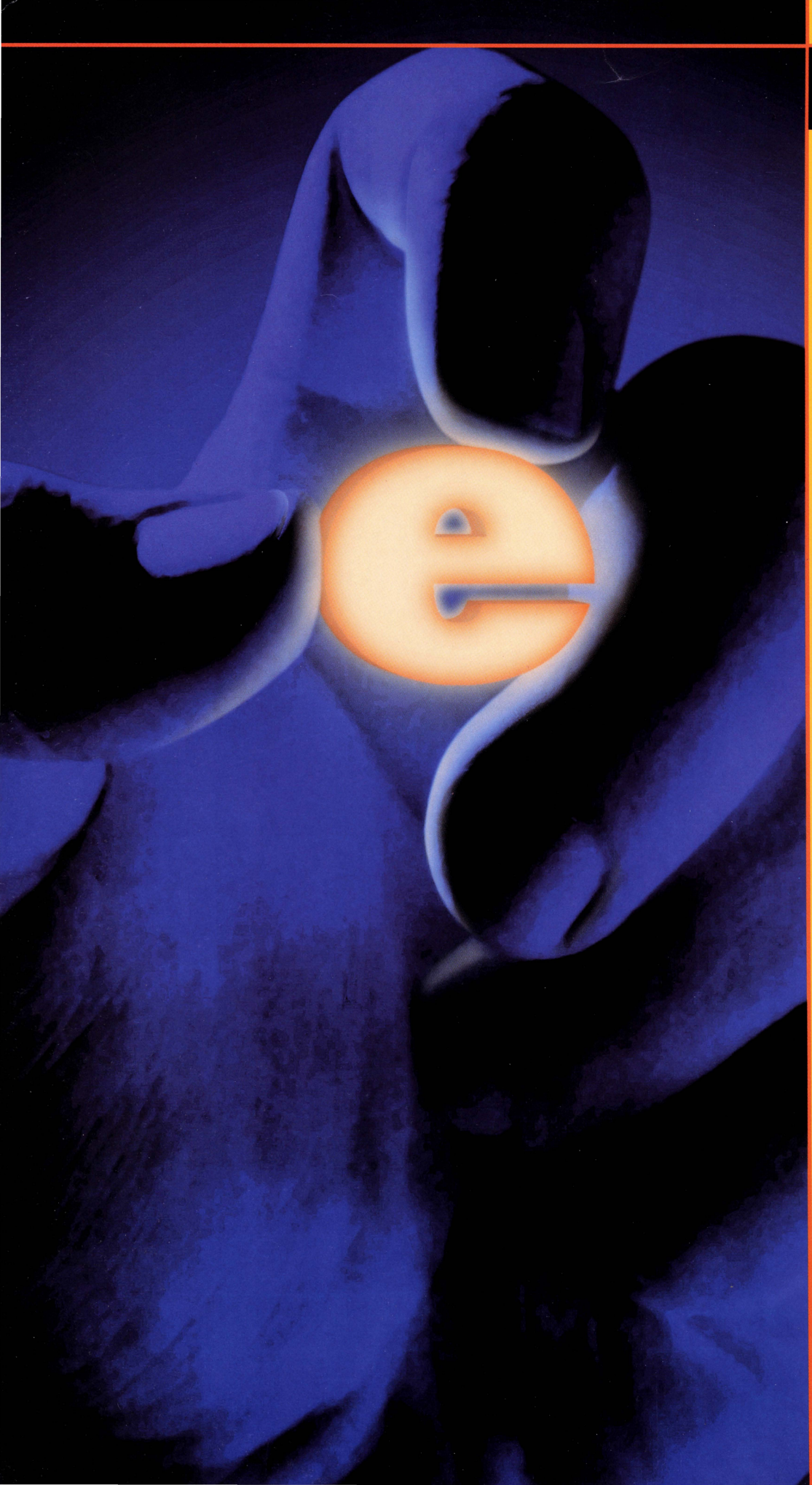
OCTOBER

VOLUME 24, No. 11 • 1998

FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT/FEC INDUSTRY

The Midway Machine: Assembling The Hits Of Tomorrow.

AMOA Wrap-Up
Fun Expo Preview



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News BULLETIN

OLD SONG, NEW VERSE: AMOA CELEBRATES ITS 50th ANNIVERSARY IN NASHVILLE

The first night of AMOA Expo '98 was filled with activities, ranging from a dinner for over 20 past presidents hosted by the Amusement and Music Operators Association to a distributor gala at the Country Music Hall of Fame, hosted by the American Amusement Manufacturers Association. What could be more appropriate in Nashville than having cocktails next to Elvis' convertible or under Hank Williams' guitar?

At the past presidents dinner, we were introduced to the new executive vice president Jack Kelleher, who is slated to start his official duties on Oct. 5. AMOA has severed its relationship with Smith, Bucklin, its management company for the past 13 years.

Along with this new addition, it was also announced that W.T. Glasgow & Co. will now manage the AMOA Expo. The folks at Glasgow, including Bill Glasgow and Judy Novak, are already old friends, as they have been managing the ACME/ASI show for over a decade.

Although the scuttlebutt before the expo had most showgoers anticipating a disappointing show, it wasn't quite as bad as we thought it would be. However, nor was it as good as we would have liked it to be. Yes, the show floor was smaller than we are accustomed to at an AMOA show, but there was business going on and new products shown. The show opened with a bigger turnout than many were expecting. AMOA flyers predicting 6,000 in attendance may have been a bit optimistic, but there was no shortage of activity on the floor.

First-day enthusiasm prevailed. Several of the biggest news topics on the floor were PC-based games arriving with improved hardware and software and TouchTunes' agreement to acquire song mechanical rights from three major record companies for its digital downloading jukebox.

Turn to page 147 for complete AMOA Expo coverage.

ABOVE: **At a special dinner, past AMOA presidents Don VanBrackel and Gene Urso share a hearty laugh while organizer Rus Mawdsley looks on.**

LEFT: **BFC Enterprises' Mike Davis loves his wife Sharon's taste in hats!**

RIGHT: **Randy Fromm shares service tips with Don Bosworth of Entertainment Systems.**

BELOW: **New Orleans Novelty's Mark (l) and Jack Boasberg said Namco's *Panic Park* was one of their favorites.**

SENATE BILL COULD IMPACT COIN-OP

Industry members should keep a close eye on Capitol Hill. The Senate version of a bill passed in July that included the Internet Gambling Prohibition Act defines bets and wagers in a way that could make illegal interactive amusement and tournament video games including the proposed NANI system and a number of games and game systems already out in the market like those from Incredible Technologies and Merit Industries, as well as games under development.

A coalition has been established to assist in shaping the House version of the legislation to insure that the industry's games are excluded from the coverage of the bill, advises Elliott Portnoy, counsel to AAMA, who is spearheading the legislative effort on behalf of the coalition: the Interactive Amusement and Tournament Video Game Coalition composed of AMOA, AAMA, NANI, and a number of interested manufacturers, distributors, and operators.

Portnoy commented, "Things look good in the House at the moment, but the situation is fluid and could change very quickly. This is an issue that will likely resurface early next year if not resolved in the next few weeks." He explained that congressmen are trying to eliminate virtual casinos, or cyber casinos, through the Internet. However, the Senate drafted its language in a way that unintentionally covers coin-op games.

Portnoy added, "This is very good example of AAMA, AMOA, NANI, manufacturers, distributors, and operators working together in a very aggressive and appropriate collaborative way. Everyone has the same objective."

SECOND GAMEZONE ADDS LAZER RUNNER

A second Gamezone location has added the Lazer Runner laser tag system from Ascension Productions. The new location, Sheridan Gamezone in Amherst, N.Y., is a newly upgraded and renovated bowling entertainment center with 48 lanes of computerized scoring bowling, pool tables, and high-tech video arcade. The first Gamezone location with Lazer Runner was another bowling center in North Tonawanda, N.Y.

Said Doug Wilson, sales manager for Lazer Runner: "This is an exciting deal for us, and one that certainly is a strong testimonial to the successful combination for any entertainment center that offers both bowling and laser tag. Probably the most noticeable impact any entertainment center experiences after installing Laser Runner is a strong increase in group and party bookings."

Lazer Runner has over 340 sites worldwide.

LEDTRONICS MOVES TO NEW OFFICE

LED supply company LEDtronics Inc. has moved to new headquarters that will triple the firm's manufacturing space. Company officials say the move will make service even better for all their valued customers. The new billing and shipping address is 23105 Kashiwa Court, Torrance, CA 90505. Other pertinent numbers are: (800)579-4875 or (301)534-1505; fax (310)534-1424; Web site (www.ledtronics.com).

NEW ENTERTAINMENT DEVELOPMENTS

☛ Playdium Entertainment Corp. of Canada has selected two of the top design and architectural firms, Rockwell Group and Sceno Plus, to create an entertainment environment for the next generation of Playdium-branded entertainment centers. The design will be unveiled at the Playdium Burnaby's official opening in November, and design features will be applied at Playdium locations worldwide. Playdium centers are in Mississauga, Burnaby, and Edmonton; a Toronto site is under construction. In addition, Playdium operates and provides equipment for 15 game centers across Canada including Famous Players' TechTowns.

☛ Camber Entertainment of the United Kingdom will build and install Nickels and Dimes' first 3D motion theater destined for the Galleria Mall in Houston, Texas, in November. The new FEC will feature a 14-seat Stargazer theater based on two, 17-seat pods with Camber's motion base. Two 3D ridefilms produced by the German company ILFO are included in the deal: Astro Cops and Action Race. Camber plans to launch six more 3D ridefilms early next year in conjunction with international production company nWave Pictures.

In other Camber news, the company has supplied two novel motion simulator rides for the Mars 2112 entertainment complex at Broadway and West 51st in the Times Square district of New York City, N.Y. The rides are custom-built space capsules that each carry 22 passengers and encompass the latest in MovieRide technology.

KODAK AND UNIVERSAL STRIKE DEAL

Eastman Kodak Co. is licensing content from Universal Studios' classic motion pictures to be used in creating personal pictures for visitors to entertainment locations ranging from movie theater lobbies to retail stores and sports arenas to theme parks. Under the agreement, visitors to these sites will be able to place themselves in a scene from hit movies such as "Jurassic Park" and "Babe" and the new "Woody Woodpecker" television show debuting on the Fox Kids network. The scenes will be used in conjunction with Kodak's Sticker Prints photo kiosk and the Kodak fantasy theater.

CORRECTIONS

☛ Last month we told readers about the e system developed by Coin ConneXion. It's an easy, economical, and effective management software for coin-op. It sounds so good that we're certain operators will want more information. Unfortunately, we accidentally printed one of the phone numbers wrong. For those of you who couldn't reach Coin ConneXion, give them another try with these phone numbers: (877)264-6269 or (605)331-5575.

☛ In a September issue notice of the MaxFlight VR2002 Cyber Coaster installation at the St. Louis Union Station, a typographical error indicated the ride experience featured 60-degree loops. That should be 360-degree loops, major elements in the excitement generated by MaxFlight's programmable roller coaster simulator. ▲

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New contributing technical writer Johnny Bozsik of Fun-O-Rama provides a handful of technical tips ranging from pinball to video to redemption.

Disney Quest offers "the ultimate interactive adventure." Page 75.

COVER

Midway continues to produce games that operators and players enjoy. Among the newest are *NFL Blitz '99*, following on the heels of its popular predecessor, with engaging new incentives for players to venture from home to the arcade; upgraded *Touchmaster* in countertop and upright; and *The Champion Pub* and *Monster Bash* pinballs.

The company believes in focusing on the players and providing them with a continuous stream of stimulating new games.

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NEXT MONTH:

- **Fun Expo '98 Wrap-Up**
- **IAAPA '98 Preview**
- **"Music Notes" gets the lowdown on digitally downloading music.**

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MIDWAY GAMES INC.

Technology opens doors, but you must be prepared

During the recent Ohio Coin Machine Association state show, among the speakers was Richard Ditton of Incredible Technologies. He spoke to operators on the subject of downloading video games. His discussion involved delving into the technology—both available now and not available yet—that must be obtained to make downloading video games a viable alternative, if in fact, that's what we want.

Valerie Cognevich Editor

The possibility of downloading video games was discussed when AMOA first presented its National Automatic Networking Inc. (NANI) several years ago. There was a groundswell of speculation that downloading video games was the true intention behind the whole NANI program. Of course, not only has downloading video games not happened, NANI clearly has not yet emerged as a viable program for operators.

Richard, who is an engineer, speaks from an engineer's perspective. His company, like I have to remind anyone, has seen tremendous success with *Golden Tee 3D Golf* and its networked system. Operators have praised ITS for its accomplishment, often claiming it has been the difference between a black or red bottom line. If any company has the skinny on this subject, most would agree it would be Incredible Technologies. Richard did not mince words when he said, "Video games won't be downloaded for quite some time." He then proceeded to explain why. It boiled down to one basic fact: There simply is no way fast or cheap enough to download a video game right now. He gave a detailed description of a number of current technologies and why each was not ready to help in downloading video games. He cited a lack of standards, and added that although the technology is there, it's just not viable for this application.

Our "Coinman" this time is Ohio operator Ryck Zarick, who has that technology gene tucked away somewhere in his being. However, he admits that as much as he likes new technology and uses it, it still scares him. Why? Because he feels like we are getting way too dependent on it. Even fast food employees freeze when the high-tech cash register breaks. I remember working at McDonald's in my much younger days, challenging myself to add up orders in my head before delivering them to the customers. We didn't have cash registers featuring a photo of fries or a shake on the keys.

Our good friend Ann Winfield of Ralph's Automatic Coin Machine Services in Canada called one day to chat. We covered the usual topics: the state of the industry and what lies ahead. We speculated about the future of the industry, and in the conversation, Ann asked about DVD and if it was going to have an impact on our industry. I honestly had to tell her that I just wasn't sure. But she got me thinking. I've talked with others, asked about it in a seminar at the Ohio state show, and scoured the Internet seeking wisdom about DVD. Our new associate editor Jim McCormick took on the topic of DVD as his first assignment. He talked with industry experts and studied the pages of information I had gotten from the Internet. Well, Ann, I think Jim has done a wonderful job of sorting through a ton of information to give you, and others who have wondered about DVD, some things to think about.

Those who attended the AMOA show in Nashville were treated to several seminars on subjects like the Internet, PC games, networking, and the OAA initiative. And, of course, NANI. All gave attendees an insight into some future possibilities for our industry, all involving emerging technology. But while many sat through these seminars hoping to hear some optimistic predictions about the industry's future, other topics like buying and selling a route, buying or leasing coin-op equipment, and video content and the parental advisory system, brought us back to the reality of operating in today's climate. Yes, technology is perhaps opening some new doors, but once you pass through, you have to be prepared. ▲

We want to hear from you about any of the articles in this issue or topics you's like to see. Phone: 504/488-7003; FAX: 504/488-7083; e-mail: (news@playmeter.com).

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Equipment Poll

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VIDEO KITS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Golden Tee '98 *(Incred. Tech.)*	8.41	199	42.59
2.	Area 51/Max Force Duo *(Atari)*	8.05	261	37.96
3.	NFL Blitz *(Midway)*	7.65	506	50.93
4.	Marvel vs. Capcom *(Capcom)*	7.45	234	35.19
5.	Tekken 3 *(Namco)*	7.38	827	58.33
6.	Point Blank *(Namco)*	7.36	874	23.15
7.	Fisherman's Bait *(Konami)--tie*	7.33	91	22.22
7.	Soul Caliber *(Namco)--tie*	7.33	35	5.56
8.	Metal Slug 2 *(SNK)*	7.20	64	27.78
9.	Golden Tee '97 *(Incred. Tech.)*	7.11	648	52.78
10.	Area 51 *(Atari)*	7.07	1573	74.07
11.	Golden Tee 3D Golf *(Incred. Tech)*	7.02	1379	41.67
12.	Police Trainer *(P&P)*	6.90	541	62.04
13.	Sharpshooter *(P&P)*	6.89	19	8.33
14.	Bust-A-Move Again *(Taito)*	6.73	603	10.19
15.	Dynamite Cop *(Sega)*	6.71	8	6.48
16.	Zero Point *(GameVision)*	6.53	23	15.74
17.	Street Fighter Alpha 3 *(Capcom)*	6.35	✶	15.74
18.	Raiden Fighters 2 *(Fabtek)*	6.32	26	20.37
19.	Marvel Heroes vs SF *(Capcom)*	6.28	189	36.11
20.	Winter Heat *(Sega)*	6.25	✶	3.70
21.	World Class Bowling *(Incred. Tech.)*	6.10	344	19.44
22.	Tournament Solitaire *(Dynamo)*	6.08	686	11.11
23.	Strikers 1945 Part 2 *(Worldwide)*	6.05	98	19.44
24.	Super Puzzle Fighter II *(Capcom)--tie*	6.00	70	5.56
24.	Surf Planet *(Atari)--tie*	6.00	95	17.59
25.	Raiden DX *(Fabtek)*	5.91	346	21.30
26.	Tekken 2 *(Namco)*	5.90	1037	45.37
27.	Raiden II *(Fabtek)*	5.89	785	25.93
28.	King of Fighters '98	5.83	✶	5.56
29.	S.F. III 2nd Impact *(Capcom)*	5.82	✶	10.19
30.	Marvel Super Heroes *(Capcom)*	5.75	382	22.22
31.	Lethal Enforcers *(Konami)--tie*	5.70	1618	52.78
31.	X-Men vs. Street Fighter *(Capcom)--tie*	5.70	333	39.81
32.	Bust-A-Move *(SNK)*	5.67	483	41.67
33.	Super Gem Fighter *(Capcom)*	5.60	✶	4.63
34.	Metal Slug *(SNK)*	5.56	418	37.96
35.	Aero Fighters 3 *(SNK)*	5.55	76	10.19
36.	19XX *(Capcom)*	5.50	119	11.11
37.	Die Hard Arcade *(Sega)*	5.49	430	41.67

VIDEO DEDICATED

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Time Crises II *(Namco)*	9.46	239	24.07
2.	House of the Dead *(Sega)*	8.32	838	28.70
3.	Tourn. 3D Golf *(Incred. Tech)*	7.81	873	24.07
4.	Gun Blade NY *(Sega)*	7.57	974	12.96
5.	Maximum Force *(Atari)*	7.20	685	54.63
6.	Solitaire Challenge *(Dynamo)*	7.19	1500	14.81
7.	Time Crisis *(Namco)*	6.95	1041	18.52
8.	Beast Busters: 2nd Nightmare *(SNK)*	6.75	10	3.70
9.	Radikal Bikers *(Atari)*	6.67	9	11.11
10.	Virtua Fighter 3 *(Sega)*	6.31	154	12.04
11.	Virtua Cop 2 *(Sega)*	6.14	900	26.85
12.	Virtua Fighter 2 *(Sega)*	5.90	930	19.44
13.	W. Class Bowl Tourn. *(Incred. Tech)*	5.82	5	15.74
14.	Virtual On *(Sega)*	5.80	151	18.52
15.	Mortal Kombat 4 *(Midway)*	5.42	168	41.67

VIDEO SIMULATORS

1.	Top Skater *(Sega)*	8.84	823	17.59
2.	The Lost World: J. Park *(Sega)*	8.79	591	30.56
3.	San Francisco Rush: Rock *(Atari)*	8.50	551	37.04
4.	Cruis'n World *(Midway)*	8.34	1186	68.52
5.	Rapid River *(Namco)*	8.25	194	3.70
6.	Harley Davidson/LA Riders *(Sega)*	7.92	299	23.15
7.	California Speed *(Atari)*	7.49	286	43.52
8.	Off Road Challenge *(Midway)*	7.48	560	42.59
9.	Daytona USA Limited *(Sega)*	7.43	458	6.48
10.	San Francisco Rush *(Atari)*	7.39	994	35.19
11.	Cruis'n USA *(Midway)*	7.30	2440	62.04
12.	Daytona USA *(Sega)*	7.28	2573	46.30
13.	Tokyo Wars *(Namco)*	7.18	440	10.19
14.	Aqua Jet *(Namco)*	7.17	536	5.56
15.	Home Run Derby *(ICE)*	7.14	412	6.48
16.	Alpine Racer 2 *(Namco)*	7.12	856	23.15
17.	Wave Runner *(Sega)*	7.08	742	11.11
18.	Sega Super GT *(Sega)*	7.00	529	10.19
19.	Winding Heat *(Konami)*	6.63	237	7.41
20.	Manx TT *(Sega)*	6.58	632	11.11
21.	Motocross Go! *(Namco)*	6.50	16	3.70
22.	Alpine Surfer *(Namco)*	6.08	536	12.04
23.	Indy 500 Twin *(Sega)*	6.00	497	16.67
24.	Alpine Racer *(Namco)*	5.93	1338	13.89
25.	Cyber Cycles *(Namco)*	5.92	1026	11.11

What the numbers mean:

Point Value—An average of the ratings that operators give each game they circle (on a scale of 3-10) on their Equipment Poll ballots.

Longevity Points—Awarded after compiling a list of the top 60 videos and pinballs (combined) and compiling the top 60 redemption games (all categories combined). The #1 game gets 60 points, the #2 game gets 59 points, on down to the #60 game that gets 1 point. The higher the longevity points the better the "legs" of the game.

Percentage of Response—Amount of respondents who rated the games; another barometer of game success.

✶ New or reappearing games ✶✶Play Meter 1997 Reader Survey

The JOE DILLON Commemorative Dinner

We are very pleased to announce a commemorative dinner in honor of Joe Dillon, a respected leader who helped build the coin-op industry during his years at Seeburg and Williams/Bally/Midway. Tragically, we lost Joe to cancer last February. The Joe Dillon Commemorative Dinner is being held on Tuesday, November 17,1998 (the night before the IAAPA show) in Irving, Texas.

Joe touched the lives of so many people in this industry. His leadership, intelligence, wisdom and amazing sense of humor have been sorely missed by many of us since his death. While most of us miss him personally and professionally, there is a group that Joe was involved with outside of the coin-op world that also is feeling his loss: The Mercy Home for Boys and Girls.

This organization has spent the last 110 years transforming the lives of struggling children and teens in the Chicago area. They provide a home and hope for kids that otherwise could end up on the streets. Joe grew up in a large working-class family on the west side of Chicago, and he felt a deep commitment to the Mercy Homes as he personally witnessed some of the thousands of lives they saved over the years. 94% of the funding for the Mercy Home comes from private sources, primarily from individual contributors like Joe Dillon.

The fund we are establishing will honor Joe Dillon and permanently support the Mercy Home for Boys and Girls. The Joe Dillon Commemorative Dinner is the first step, where we will raise funds to make the initial contribution. 100% of the proceeds from the Joe Dillon Commemorative Dinner will go to the Mercy Home for Boys and Girls.

The dinner is being held at La Cima Club in Irving, Texas. The address is:

La Cima Club
The Tower at Williams Square, 26th Floor
5215 O'Connor Road
Irving, Texas

Cocktails will be at 7:00pm, with dinner at 8:00pm. The cost is $250 per person, or $2,000 for an entire table of 10 people. There will also be a silent auction at the dinner to generate additional contributions to the fund.

To reserve your place at this very special evening, please contact the Midway sales department at (773)961-1204. For those of you who cannot attend but would like to contribute to the fund, please send donations to:

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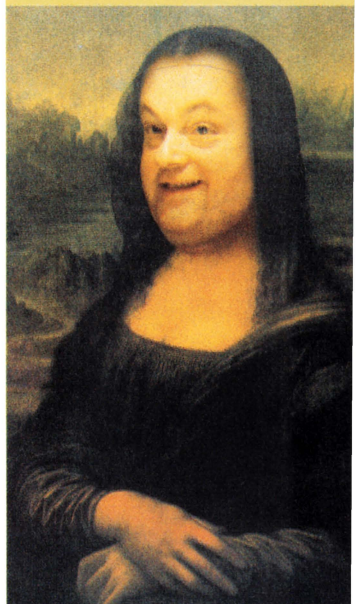

"The Operators' Choice"

PLAY METER

Equipment Poll

REDEMPTION

ALLEY BOWLERS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Basket Fever *(Bay Tek)*	8.14	650	6.48
2.	Skee-Ball Too! *(Skee-Ball)*	7.89	667	8.33
3.	ICE Ball *(ICE)*	7.78	1003	8.33
4.	Bug Bash *(Bay Tek)*	6.75	719	3.70
5.	Smartball *(Smart)*	6.71	470	6.48

SPORTS GAMES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Super Shot *(Skee-Ball)*	7.45	960	10.19
2.	Full Court Fever *(ICE)*	6.89	875	8.33
3.	Hoop Shot *(ICE)*	6.67	399	8.33
4.	Full Court Frenzy *(ICE)--tie*	6.61	535	16.67
4.	Shoot to Win *(Smart)--tie*	6.61	721	16.67
5.	Hoop It Up *(Atari)*	6.13	1089	21.30
6.	Rage 'N Cage *(Skee-Ball)--tie*	5.75	308	3.70
6.	Triple Jam *(Coastal)--tie*	5.75	50	3.70
7.	UB-QB Football *(Skee-Ball)*	5.63	127	14.81
8.	Slugfest *(Williams)*	5.30	7	18.52
9.	Arm Champs *(Jaleco)*	5.00	232	3.70

CRANES/ROTARIES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Rainbow *(Rainbow)*	9.38	1423	7.41
2.	Classic Watch Crane *(Smart)*	8.17	1091	5.56
3.	Clean Sweep *(Smart)*	7.42	1252	33.33
4.	Plush Bus *(ICE)*	7.33	140	5.56
5.	Lax *(Noel Industries)*	7.00	146	11.11
6.	Big Choice *(Fun Merchants)*	6.63	835	17.59
7.	Jumbo Crane *(Grayhound)*	6.57	751	6.48
8.	Candy Crane *(Smart)*	6.26	503	28.70
9.	Skill Crane *(Grayhound)*	5.71	436	12.96

CHILDREN'S GAMES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Mini Dunx *(ICE)*	8.00	430	4.63
2.	Shoot To Win! Jr. *(Smart)*	6.92	915	11.11
3.	Smart Toss Em *(Smart)*	6.60	800	4.63
4.	Toss Em *(UETD)*	6.33	274	5.56
5.	Frantic Fred *(ICE)*	5.80	*	4.63
6.	Jr. All American *(UETD)*	5.75	55	3.70
7.	Feed Big Bertha *(Smart)*	5.71	309	15.74
8.	Hungry, Hungry Hippos *(ICE)*	5.70	26	9.26
9.	Bozo Basketball *(Design Plus)*	5.67	98	5.56
10.	Skee-Toss B.C. *(Skee-Ball)*	5.50	28	11.11
11.	Awesome Toss 'Em *(Lazer-Tron)*	5.00	126	6.48

ROLL DOWNS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Spin To Win *(Lazer-Tron)--tie*	6.50	988	16.67
1.	Spin-a-21 *(Lazer-Tron)--tie*	6.50	205	3.70
2.	Jungle Rama *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.00	427	7.41
3.	Jungle Picnic *(Bay Tek)*	5.83	1	5.56
4.	Roll Down *(Bay Tek)*	5.75	82	3.70
5.	Clown Roll Down *(Bay Tek)*	5.38	197	7.41

NOVELTY

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Cyclone *(ICE)*	9.06	1995	30.56
2.	Cyclone Jr. *(ICE)--tie*	8.83	1230	5.56
2.	Surfin' Safari *(5 Star)--tie*	8.83	758	5.56
3.	Claim Jumper *(Benchmark)*	8.11	315	8.33
4.	Dinoscore *(Planet Earth)*	8.05	1663	20.37
5.	Colorama *(Bromley)--tie*	8.00	1495	8.33
5.	Treasure Falls *(Planet Earth)--tie*	8.00	1190	9.26
6.	Round 'n Round *(Astro)*	7.83	1101	5.56
7.	Air It Out *(Bay Tek)*	7.25	36	3.70
8.	Solar Spin *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.13	840	7.41
9.	Steer Crazy *(Fun Industries)*	6.63	215	7.41
10.	Flip N Win *(Planet Earth)--tie*	6.33	513	5.56
10.	Prize Zone *(Lazer-Tron)--tie*	6.33	390	8.33
11.	Pirate's Revenge *(5 Star)*	6.00	367	5.56
12.	Dump the Ump *(ICE)*	5.89	120	8.33
13.	Simple Simon *(Sammy USA)*	5.60	131	9.26
14.	Cosmo Gang *(Data East)*	5.33	2	11.11
15.	Hop-A-Tic-Tac-Toe *(Data East)*	5.14	46	20.37
16.	Killer T-Rex *(Smart)--tie*	5.00	194	3.70
16.	Pop-A-Ball *(Coastal)--tie*	5.00	84	12.96
16.	Pop-A-Slot *(Coastal)--tie*	5.00	311	5.56

COIN DROP GAMES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Big Haul *(Benchmark)*	8.54	1248	22.22
2.	Smokin' Token *(Seidel)*	7.87	1643	21.30
3.	Cut the Cheese *(Sega)*	7.75	759	7.41
4.	Addams Family Values *(Midway)*	7.60	407	4.63
5.	Vortex *(Island)*	7.25	36	3.70
6.	Wheel 'M In *(Bromley)*	7.18	1469	20.37
7.	Goin' Rollin' *(Seidel)--tie*	7.17	1086	5.56
7.	Screamin' Slopes *(Midway)--tie*	7.17	397	5.56
8.	Twister *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.10	247	9.26
9.	Roll For Gold *(Benchmark)*	7.00	441	5.56
10.	Home Run Hitter *(CCI)*	6.38	623	12.04
11.	Coin Circus *(Sammy USA)*	6.27	312	10.19
12.	Pirate's Gold *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.25	269	3.70
13.	The Mask *(Data East)*	6.22	810	8.33

GUN GAMES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Water Game *(Bob's Space)*	7.40	563	4.63
2.	Miner's Revenge *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.00	229	5.56
3.	Big Mouth *(Meltec)*	5.86	153	6.48
4.	Knock-Down *(Meltec)*	5.78	116	8.33

BOPPING/STOMPING GAMES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Spider Stompin *(Island)*	7.46	1363	12.04
2.	Ribbit Racin *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.05	955	18.52
3.	Swamp Stomp *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.83	623	5.56
4.	Spider Splattin' *(Island)*	6.75	208	3.70
5.	Circus Hi-Rise *(Skee-Ball)*	6.63	323	7.41
6.	Whac-A-Mole *(Bob's Space)*	6.10	200	9.26
7.	Wacky Gator *(Data East)*	5.82	508	20.37

***Play Meter 1997 Reader Survey*

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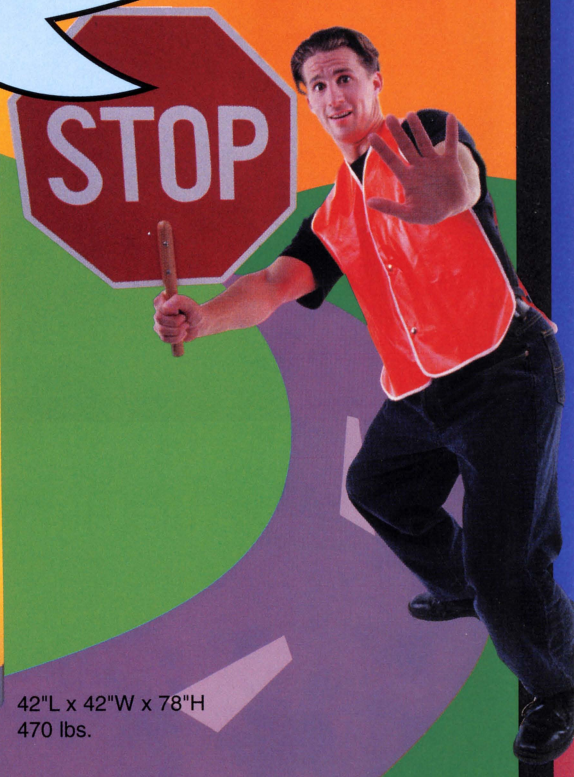

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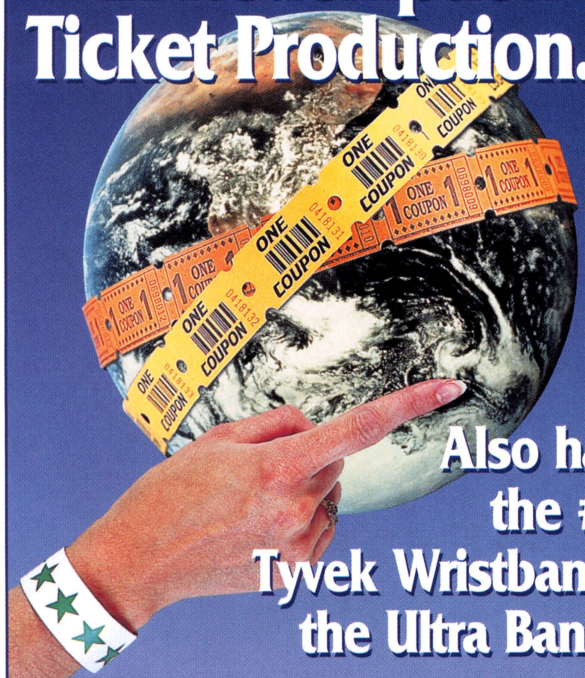

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"The Operators' Choice"

PLAY METER

Equipment Poll

PRIZE VENDORS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Sports Arena *(Sammy USA)*	7.84	307	23.15
2.	Copy Cat *(Fun Industries)*	5.67	3	5.56
3.	Kick n Catch *(Fun Industries)*	5.10	1	9.26

PINBALLS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Medieval Madness *(Williams)*	7.78	664	33.33
2.	Attack From Mars *(Bally)*	7.05	1266	38.89
3.	The Champion Pub *(Bally)*	6.92	105	12.04
4.	The Addams Family *(Bally)*	6.91	3595	52.78
5.	Scared Stiff *(Bally)*	6.88	751	29.63
6.	Viper Night Drivin' *(Sega)*	6.67	158	8.33
7.	Theatre of Magic *(Bally)*	6.64	1435	41.67
8.	Starship Troopers *(Sega)*	6.50	14	14.81
9.	Arabian Nights *(Williams)*	6.46	570	24.07
10.	X-Files *(Sega)*	6.41	126	20.37
11.	Independence Day *(Sega)*	6.33	334	11.11
12.	Star Trek: TNG *(Williams)*	6.29	1745	35.19
13.	Junk Yard *(Williams)*	6.27	334	20.37
14.	Cirqus Voltaire *(Bally)*	6.26	60	25.00
15.	No Good Golfers *(Williams)*	6.19	145	14.81

COUNTERTOPS

1.	Megatouch XL *(Merit)*	8.62	960	50.93
2.	Megatouch 5 *(Merit)*	7.74	540	38.89
3.	Megatouch Tournament *(Merit)*	7.45	832	10.19
4.	Touchmaster 4000 *(Midway)*	7.37	37	17.59
5.	Touchmaster *(Midway)*	7.29	803	12.96
6.	Megatouch IV *(Merit)*	7.22	1261	37.96
7.	Concorde 2 *(JVL)*	6.68	56	17.59

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

What is your most popular laser tag system?

Lazer Runner (Ascension Productions)--tie
Ultrazone (Ultrazone)--tie

In order to accommodate the influx of new games on the ballot we have discontinued the Classic Video category. All-time favorites such as *Ms Pac-Man* are universally recognized and will always have a dedicated following. We applaud the impact these classics have had on the industry; they have earned a place in the Coin-Op Hall of Fame.

Due to the popularity of the new Prize Vendors we have added a category for that equipment.

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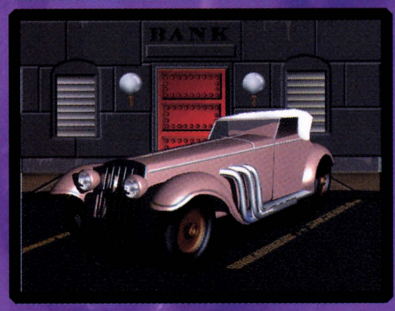

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The "I" Word:

not as scary as it seems

I read with interest a recent news item that alerted both the secular and spiritual communities that Pope John Paul II would be going live on the Internet. The Pope has a Web site (www.vatican.va/)! If the Pope can tackle cyberspace, can we of little faith be far behind?

The whole notion of this network of networks known as the Internet is daunting, especially to those of us who did not grow up in the Computer Age. I learned to type on a manual typewriter, so my approach to anything but the word processing function on my computer is intimidating. I know I am not alone in this regard. The fellow fearful joined me Thursday, Sept. 17, for the early morning seminar retitled "Exploring the Internet," instead of the original "Microsoft Internet Explorer & the Internet."

Microsoft declined participation, and moderator Jim Pietrangelo of A.M.A. Distributors in Metairie, La., flew without a net.

Pietrangelo, a member of the AMOA board of directors, long ago embraced the Internet and realized the possibilities it holds for our industry. He was the right person to help guide attendees looking for Internet basics.

Before the session, he commented: "It doesn't make sense that more people in the coin-op industry don't get involved. The Internet has kept the AMOA board of directors close, although we are scattered all over the country. Most manufacturers have Web sites. For example, Incredible Technologies posts high scores from its *Golden Tee 3D Golf* tournaments on the Internet, and Midway Mfg. recently held its Blitz Bowl on the Internet."

Pietrangelo sees the Internet as an avenue for players to communicate with our industry, since it allows for a certain amount of anonymity. The Internet is definitely interactive! He foresees a day when distributors can take parts orders over the Internet. "It's ideal for commerce," said Pietrangelo. "It's a form of advertising. Other industries are further ahead in their use of the Internet than ours in this respect."

On the Internet you can see something before you get it, such as screen shots from a new game. This kind of preview would be impossible minus the Internet.

Pietrangelo's main goal was to eliminate fear of this new communication tool. It's simply sending material and receiving material over the phone lines. It's convenient and allows access to a world library of information at any moment of the day.

AMOA seminars this year were more than practical. Keep up the good work, Lee Wesson, and members of the education subcommittee.

Bonnie Theard
Managing Editor

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Merit Industries bought by Riverside Co.

Merit president Peter Feuer received an award from AAMA president Mike Rudowicz last year at the ASI Expo.

Merit Industries, manufacturer of *MegaTouch* touchscreen entertainment and *Scorpion/Merkur* electronic dart machines, has been purchased by the Riverside Co. Riverside is a diversified financial group that invests in industry-leading companies to support future growth through product and market expansions and increased research and development.

Merit founder and president Peter Feuer retains a significant shareholder interest in the new structure and will continue to actively lead the company. The entire Merit staff remains in place to provide seamless support to Merit customers.

Feuer said of the acquisition, "Merit's success over the past 21 years is the result of the great products we produce, the way we listen to players and customers and respond to their needs, and most of all the contributions and energy of the entire Merit team. I'm especially pleased with the strong commitment of Riverside to support all of our efforts in this great industry and the confidence shown in our staff's capabilities."

He added, "This year will be the strongest yet in overall sales volume, and with the renewed vigor in our marketing, finance, and sales programs, coupled with exciting new product, the sky's the limit. There will also be a strong focus on examining every way in which we can improve our performance to our customers."

Valley and Dynamo merge

Two of the leading coin-op game manufacturers are joining forces with respect to certain parts of their product lines. Valley Recreation Products and Dynamo Ltd. are merging and unveiling a new parent company that will enable them to maintain a strong foothold in the market with their traditional products as well as develop new products.

The new entity, Valley-Dynamo L.P. will merge their pool table, table soccer, table hockey, video cabinet, and home product divisions. According to principals at both companies, product lines, brand differentiation, and distribution channels will remain independent. A final closing for the merger is expected by mid-October.

Not included in this merger are Valley's dart business and Dynamo's gaming business in Montana (Summit Amusement and Distributing). The Valley National 8-Ball Association (VNEA) will remain the same.

Ferris and Holoplex sign agreement

Ferris Productions and Holoplex Inc. have signed an agreement for Ferris to distribute Holoplex video games. According to the agreement, Ferris will be the authorized distributor of Holoplex games, including Combatica, for the North American market.

Combatica allows players to fight in a hand-to-hand combat game without the use of a joystick or physical attachments. Combatica's popularity is due to the use of the Holoplex proprietary ThunderCam Motion Recognition technology. Using a video camera and a computer, this optical gesture-recognition technology translates a player's physical moves into the character's movements on the video screen, giving the player complete freedom of movement.

"Combatica and other Holoplex games are an ideal fit for Ferris Productions' current line of high-tech entertainment products," said Bob Ferris, CEO of Ferris. "By adding games of this caliber to our current offerings, Ferris is positioning itself as a central resource for arcade owners and operators when they are searching for additions to existing game and entertainment attractions."

Fai Mok, president of Holoplex, commented, "Ferris has the essential elements needed to be a successful game distributor."

For more information, contact Holoplex, (626)582-8451; fax (626)584-8455; Web Site (www.holoplex.com); or Ferris, (800)455-8746; fax (602)470-1166.

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Fun Expo and IAFEC sign agreement

On July 15 the International Association of Family Entertainment Centers (IAFEC) and the Fun Expo signed a 10-year sponsorship agreement. Fun Expo, recently purchased by Reed Exhibition Companies, found its niche for new ideas and new information for professionals in the family and location-based entertainment business.

IAFEC offers its 2,400 members a constantly expanding group of benefits to help them operate more effectively and profitably. These include manuals, videos, research reports, discounts on insurance, and cooperative advertising to name but a few.

"Our 10-year alliance with IAFEC underscores Fun Expo's strength as the premier family entertainment industry venue and its commitment to act as an active contributor to the strength and vitality of the FEC/LBE business," said Cindy Strachan, Fun Expo's industry vice president. "We are excited about our long-term relationship and look forward to jointly serving the needs of all family and entertainment center business professionals."

IAFEC's executive director Carole Sjolander added, "Hand in hand, IAFEC and Fun Expo are proud to provide professionals in the business of fun with the strongest profit making and most comprehensive educational venue leading up to the year 2000 and beyond."

As the official sponsor of Fun Expo, IAFEC will play a key role in the development of the Fun Expo Conference Program. Continuing its efforts to serve the industry, this year a group of IAFEC members served on the first-ever Fun Expo Conference Advisory Board. Members include IAFEC vice president Phil DeAngelo (Lenape Park), director of industry development Christine Ford (Reed Exhibition Companies), IAFEC past president Ed Pearson (Sports Plus), IAFEC director Dave Schwartz (Legends), IAFEC director Frank Seninsky (Alpha-Omega Amusements), IAFEC executive director Carole Sjolander, IAFEC president Harold Skripsky (Entertainment Management Services), and IAFEC director Ron Stilwell (Peter Piper Pizza).

The 1998 Fun Expo conference program will address issues ranging from LBE development and amusement rentals to operations and facility design to marketing and open arcade architecture. The show will be held in Orlando, Fla., Oct. 14-17. For more information, contact Fun Expo, (203) 840-5606 or (888)FUN-EXPO.

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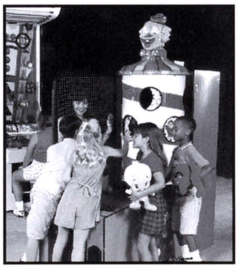
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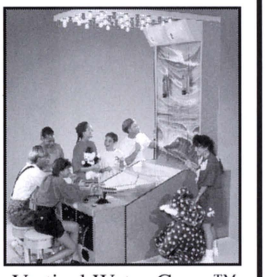
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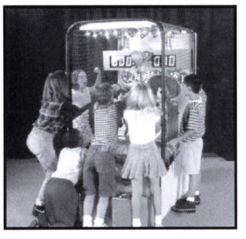
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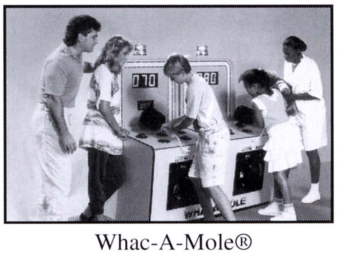
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Merit's Ultimate Game Challenge is bull's-eye for U.S. team

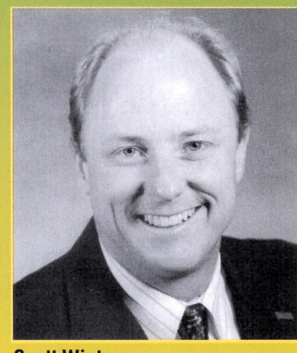
Over 2200 dart players from across the United States and seven international nations met in Orlando, Fla., from Aug. 6-9 to compete in Merit Industries season-ending tournament, the $60,000 Ultimate Game Challenge (UGC). Merit's UGC is the culmination of the $150,000 World Series of Darts held worldwide. The highlight of the week came on Friday when 15 4-person teams from around the globe competed for the honor of World Team Champions. Team U.S.A. Midwest, made up of Randy Harringer, Jimmy Damore, Hank Kline, and Tracy Sheppard, won the prestigious title.

The UGC featured events for every level of competition from novice to pro. Here are the other first place winners: Marie Martin in Women's Zap-Off, Jason Naert in Pro Singles, Teena Marie in Women's Singles, Mark Venable in No-Pro Singles, Cliff Murray in *Scorpion* Challenge, Joe's Place (Wayne Ehlinger and John Casper) in No-Pro Doubles, Orlando Trouble (Kathy Maloney and Patty Arden) in Women's Doubles, Randy Harringer and Jason Naert in Pro Doubles, Decline (Meradith McGee, Hank Kline, and Lane Helgeson) in Mixed Triples, James Martin in the Thursday Blind Draw, and Hot Dog and Dan Bass in the Friday Blind Draw.

In other Merit news, following is the *Scorpion* World Series of Darts and *Scorpion*-sanctioned tournament schedule for 1998-1999: **Oct. 23-25:** Salzburger Stier, Salzburg, Austria and Chain-O-Lake Championships, Scandinavia, Wis.; **Oct. 30-Nov.1:** European Open, Budapest Hungary; **Nov. 13-15:** World Series Alabama Classic, Birmingham, Ala.; **Nov. 20-22:** World Series Silver State Classic, Reno, Nev. and Spanish Championship, Granada, Spain; **Jan. 22-24:** World Series Indy Classic, Indianapolis, Ind.; **Jan 29-31:** World Series Keystone Klassic, Butler, Pa.; **Feb. 12-14:** World Series Volunteer Open, Knoxville, Tenn.; **Feb 19-22:** 5th Annual *Scorpion* Sting, Appleton, Wis.; **Mar. 12-14:** World Series Iowa Classic, Waterloo, Iowa; **Mar. 19-21:** World Series Empire State Classic, Albany, N.Y. and World Series Aloha Classic, Honolulu, Hawaii and Unified Championship of Spain, Malaga, Spain; **Mar. 26-28:** Kansas Klassic, Wichita, Kan. and World Series Jacksonville Classic, Jacksonville, Fla.; **May 14-16:** World Series Kissimmee Klassic, Kissimmee/Orlando, Fla.; **May 21-23:** Championship of France, La Rochelle, France; **June 18-20:** German Open Saarbruecken, Germany; and **July 23-25:** Austrian Challenge, Salzburg, Austria.

The 1998 World Team Champions of Merit Industries' Ultimate Game Challenge; From left, Peter Feuer (president of Merit), Hank Kline, Tracy Sheppard, Jimmy Damore, Randy Harringer, and Bob Wiles (Merit tournament director).

Merit Industries team continues to grow



Scott Winters

Kerry Peterson

Over the past few months, several new employees have joined Merit Industries, while others have been promoted. Merit is known for its *Megatouch* countertop and upright video games and *Scorpion* electronic dartboards and games.

Marguerite Kirby has joined Merit as the regional sales manager of the Pacific Northwest. Previously she worked with Bulldog Amusements and brings a wealth of industry experience spanning over eight years.

Moving up from his regional sales manager position, Jim Roe has been promoted to national field sales manager. Roe brings 15 years of experience and enthusiasm to the position, having started his career at Wico Industries, and then moving on to Valley Recreation Products, before joining Merit.

"We are continuing our effort to restructure our department by putting qualified people in leadership positions," said Lou Rudolph, vice president of sales. "This expansion will also allow us to work more closely with our customer base and better serve them in the future."

Also joining the Merit team, under the newly formed marketing department, is Kerry Peterson, assistant to marketing director Scott Winters. Peterson has three years of marketing and promotions experience in the radio and television industries.

Midway completes share repurchase

Midway Games has completed the repurchase of one million shares of its Common Stock. Having completed this repurchase, Midway's board of directors authorized the purchase of up to an addition one million shares of its Common Stock.

The purchases may be made in the open market from time to time over the next year. The timing of the purchases and the actual number of shares to be purchased will depend on market conditions. With previous repurchases of one million shares in May, 463,000 shares in the quarter ending in June, and 537,000 this quarter, Midway currently has 35.5 million shares outstanding.

Namco Cybertainment out of Chapter 11

Namco Cybertainment Inc. (NCI) has completed its Chapter 11 reorganization. It was effective August 21. NCI originally filed to aid in restructuring its mall-based leases, where needed, to enable the company to operate profitably at those locations. As NCI told the industry earlier, the intention all along was to renegotiate leases that were no longer viable. Now that the goal has been accomplished, NCI maintains it has emerged in an extraordinarily short time as a much stronger operator.

NCI, through predecessor entities, has been in business for over 25 years and currently operates 335 amusement centers, primarily in enclosed shopping malls. In addition, NCI supplies games to 200 other locations under varied revenue sharing arrangements.

Laser shoot-out in South Dakota

Ascension Productions, manufacturer of Lazer Runner laser tag systems, recently completed the installation of its latest Radio Frequency laser tag system at Gigglebee's family entertainment center in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Galaxy Enterprises, dba as Gigglebee's, is an entertainment center offering quality food and beverages, redemption games, a video arcade, bumper cars, soft play, and now laser tag. Gigglebee's feels that since a large percentage of their business comes from birthday parties, the addition of laser tag will result in a healthy surge in an already popular party business.

Randy Hindbjorgen, president of Gigglebee's, said that he chose Laser Runner after receiving strong praise from his valued business contact and video game supplier, American Amusement Arcades, also a Lazer Runner customer.

For more information, contact Lazer Runner, (403)496-9058.

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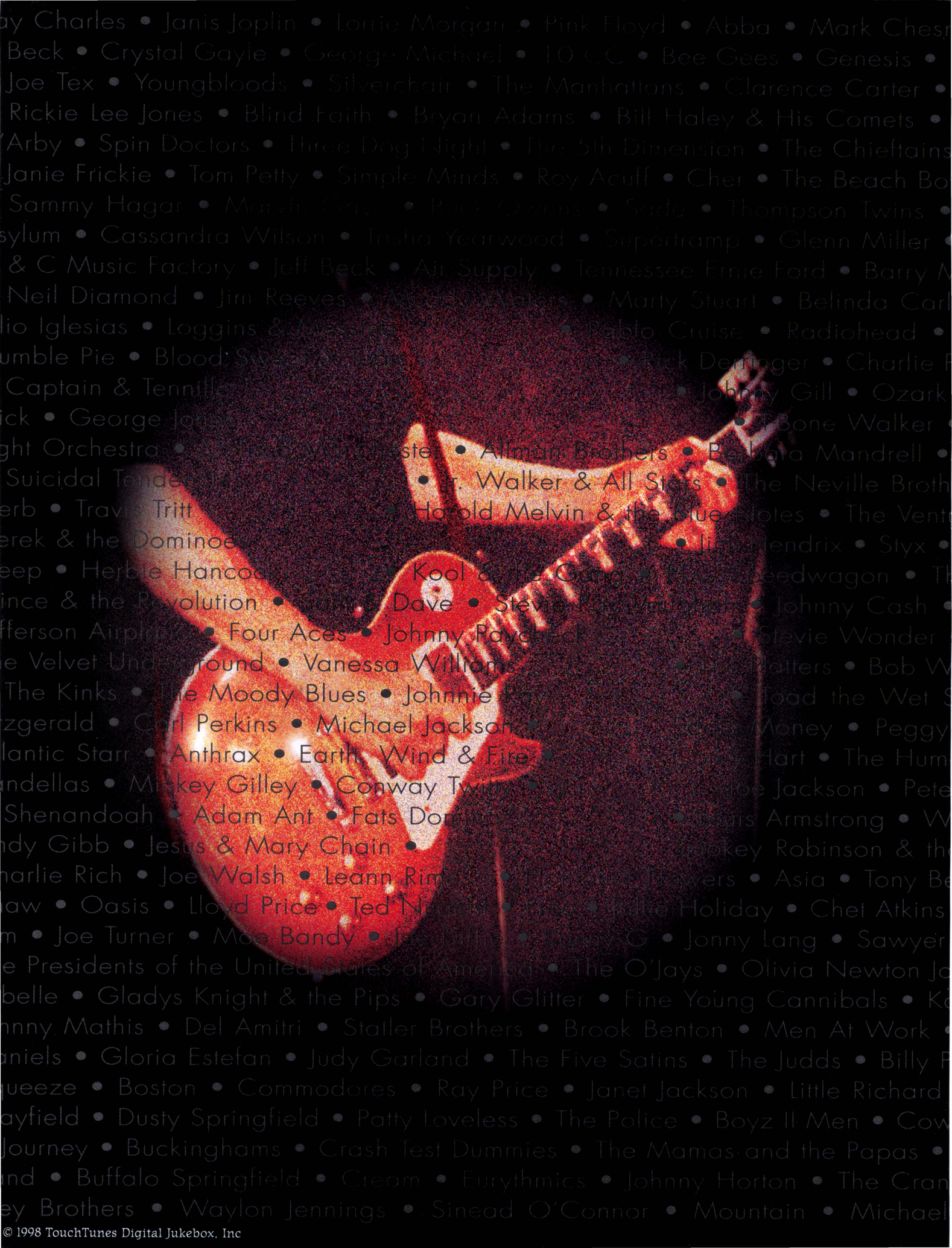
Ray Charles • Janis Joplin • Lorrie Morgan • Pink Floyd • Abba • Mark Chesn
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Sega Europe has new management team

Sega Europe's new team (l-r): Nobuo Nakanishi, David Barron, and Bob Deith.

Sega Amusements Europe Ltd. has named a new management team to facilitate further expansion into Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA).

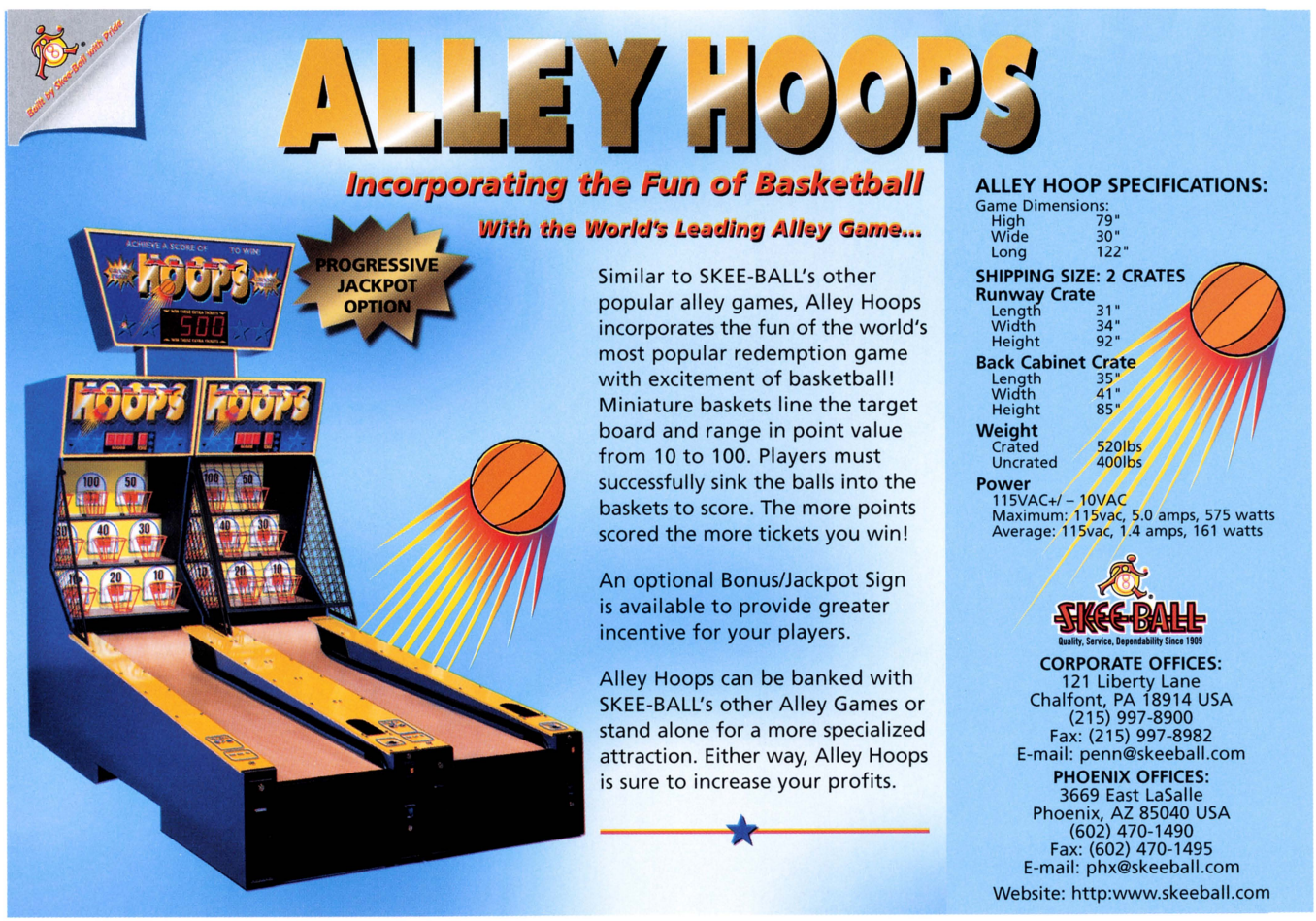
Nobuo Nakanishi will take the helm as president and CEO, responsible for all Sega's coin-op sales businesses as well as for its amusement arcade and interactive theme park business.

Mr. Nakanishi was a corporate vice president at Sega Enterprises in Japan, responsible for overseas business development, a position he held since 1993.

Bob Deith, currently joint chairman of Sega Amusement Europe, will become chairman. His main role will be special projects in close liaison with Sega Japan, supporting and advising Mr. Nakanishi, utilizing his extensive connections in the amusement industry in Europe, and pursuing public relations activities. David Barron, chief financial officer of Sega Europe Ltd., joins the new team as chief financial officer.

Mr. Nakanishi's role is to spearhead rapid expansion of Sega's amusement machine business in the United Kingdom and the EMEA markets. The new business structure is designed to facilitate better inter-company communication and is supported by a greater delegation of decision-making from Japan to Europe.

"My mission is to continue to transform the amusement business in the region and to help Sega and our business partners enter a new era of profitable growth," said Mr. Nakanishi. "Increased operational efficiency and communication are the framework for this growth, but I will be looking at all aspects of our business."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HOOPS
Similar to SKEE-BALL's other popular alley games, Alley Hoops incorporates the fun of the world's most popular redemption game with excitement of basketball! Miniature baskets line the target board and range in point value from 10 to 100. Players must successfully sink the balls into the baskets to score. The more points scored the more tickets you win!
An optional Bonus/Jackpot Sign is available to provide greater incentive for your players.
Alley Hoops can be banked with SKEE-BALL's other Alley Games or stand alone for a more specialized attraction. Either way, Alley Hoops is sure to increase your profits.
ALLEY HOOP SPECIFICATIONS:
Game Dimensions:
High 79"
Wide 30"
Long 122"
SHIPPING SIZE: 2 CRATES
Runway Crate
Length 31"
Width 34"
Height 92"
Back Cabinet Crate
Length 35"
Width 41"
Height 85"
Weight
Crated 520lbs
Uncrated 400lbs
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Globetek to represent the ALECK 64 system

Globetek will be the exclusive North American representative for the new ALECK 64 gun game system from Seta Corp. of Japan. The system was introduced at private showings during the AMOA Expo last month; software titles were tested prior to the show.

ALECK 64 uses Nintendo 64 technology and is licensed for the coin-op industry by Nintendo Co. Ltd. Globetek will represent the system in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

According to Globetek president Gil Pollock, "We are in the process of contacting major distributors to set up exclusive distribution areas. As we all know, any system success is based on the software and the continued support of software. The ALECK 64 now provides all Nintendo third-party game software developers an easy, efficient, and effective method of entry into the coin-op industry. This means a continuous supply of successfully proven games for the ALECK 64 system."

He added, "It is very exciting to be involved with a product of this quality that can be offered to distributors and operators at a price that will not require spending thousands of dollars to provide customers with quality coin-op entertainment." For more information, contact Globetek, (630)238-9207; fax (630)238-9253.

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NYU offers class on themed entertainment

The NYU School of Continuing & Professional Education will offer its first class on the themed entertainment industry. "Location Based Entertainment Venues: A Brand Extension" will begin Oct. 6 at the 33rd Street campus in Manhattan, N.Y.

"We believe this is the first class of its kind," said David Polinchock, principal of Location Based Branding Inc., who will teach the class. He added, "There have been classes before on the design side of themed entertainment, but this is the first time that the brand side has been emphasized."

The course is being supported by the themed entertainment industry. The Themed Entertainment Association; Amusement Business; and Ecklein Communications, producers of conferences focusing on themed entertainment and retail, have pledged their support.

For more information, contact NYU School of Continuing Education, (212)790-3212; or David Polinchock, (973)655-9818 or e-mail (themedguy @yahoo.com).

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Dave & Buster's settles with Edison Bros.

Dave & Buster's has settled litigation with the limited liability corporation formed by the creditors of Edison Brothers Stores Inc. that had filed a lawsuit against multiple parties in connection with the June 1995 spin-off of Dave & Buster's ("The Company") from Edison Brothers.

Edison Brothers filed for bankruptcy in Nov. '95. Dave & Buster's has agreed to pay the limited liability litigation corporation $2,125,000 in full and final settlement of all claims against them.

"Although we still believe the claims asserted against The Company are without merit, we have chosen to resolve this matter now in order to minimize further loss of management time and additional legal costs," said Dave Corriveau, co-founder and co-CEO of The Company.

Co-founder and co-CEO Buster Corley added, "We have been focused on our growth and expansion plans. This settlement will allow the investment community to focus with us on our very bright future."

Music stamp series honors Marley, Hendrix

Montserrat, British West Indies, has added to its Music Stamp Series with new editions honoring the Caribbean's own Bob Marley and rock 'n roll's Jimi Hendrix.

Montserrat is known as the island of the Soufriere Hills Volcano, which erupted in 1995 and 1997 with devastating effect on the population. But it is also steeped in the history of rock 'n roll, since it was home to Sir George Martin's AIR Studios for 10 years, where such famous artists as Paul McCartney and Eric Clapton recorded.

Queen Elizabeth II approved designs for a stamp series to help raise monies for Montserrat and the Montserrat Volcano Relief Fund. Net proceeds from stamp sales stay in Montserrat.

Montserrat issued its first rock stamp in 1994 commemorating Woodstock (1969). The new series also honors Janis Joplin, Elvis Presley, and Jerry Garcia. For more information (in the USA), write to Montserrat Music Stamps, P.O. Box 71, Foxboro, MA 02035; call (800)966-2544; fax (508)384-3130; or check the Web site (www.westminsterstampcom).

Mars sponsors sweepstakes

Mars Electronics International is sponsoring a Series 3000 Performance Sweepstakes in which one lucky winner and a companion will receive a trip to Florida and tickets to four days of stock car racing in Daytona, Fla., in February 1999. Other prizes include scale models of the M&M/Mars' Skittles race car, team hats, and team jackets.

The sweepstakes is being held to mark the introduction of Mars' new LE3800 and LE3900 (lockable removable cassette) bill acceptors. Both models use advanced optical sensing technology to provide the highest levels of performance, reliability, and security.

The acceptors can detect and read bills inserted face up or face down, in either direction, and can accept $1-2-5-10-20-50 bills and $100 bills. The bill acceptors use flash memory, so they can be electronically upgraded to handle new currency designs such as the new $20 bill recently introduced.

All entries to the sweepstakes must be on an official entry form available from Mars distributors: Happ Controls, Drew's Distributing, Tekbilt, Kevin Sharp Enterprises, and Quality Marketing.

Entry forms may also be obtained by writing to Series 3000 Performance Sweepstakes, 1301 Wilson Drive, West Chester, PA 19380, or by calling (800)3435-8215. For more information on the bill acceptors, contact Mars Electronics International at the same address and phone, or call (610)430-2500.

Tekbilt receives GLI approval

Huntingdon Valley, Pa.-based Tekbilt has received the approval of Gaming Laboratories Inc. (GLI) for all 16 game programs in its Touch the Gold multi-game touch-screen gaming machine.

GLT tested and approved the machine under New Mexico and Nevada regulations. All 16 games have state-of-the-art graphics and sound, high-tech individual game option settings, and extensive accounting ability. Touch the Gold comes in an all-metal casino-style, or round top cabinet with a progressive bonus display.

For more information, or a copy of the approval, contact Tekbilt, (800)666-7776 or (215)322-3232.

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Bean Bag Buddies 26" shown above

Clean Sweep 42" shown above

Prize Circus shown above

Candy Crane shown here

Bear Claw 34" shown here

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Building the BEST

Valley schedules championship dates

The Valley National Eight-Ball Association has set dates for its 1999 competitions: the 19th Annual VNEA International 8-Ball Championships and the 9th Annual International Junior Championships, as well as the 3rd Annual VIFA International Championships.

The eight-ball event will take place May 27-June 5 in the newly expanded Grand Ballroom of the Riviera Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas, Nev.

A record number 240 Valley pool tables will be used during the week-long battle of top players. The cash prize fund is estimated at $500,000.

Competition will occur in 20 different tournament events. The agenda includes the popular Suds & Chips Mixer, World Speed Tour, Artistic Pool Challenge, and Awards Banquet Finale.

The junior event is set for June 25-27 at the Mankato Civic Center in Mankato, Minn. Eighty Valley pool tables will be available for enthusiastic junior shooters to match their skills in three divisions: youth, minors, and majors.

Both team and singles competitions are scheduled along with an Adult/Junior Scotch Doubles contest and both Speed Pool and Artistic Pool competitions.

The VIFA will be March 10-13 at the Riviera Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. Hundreds of talented foosball players will face each other on over 120 Valley Tornado tables, to determine the best league players and take home part of the estimated $40,000 prize fund.

For more information, contact VNEA executive director Gregg Elliott, (800)544-1346; or check the VNEA Web site (www.vnea.com).

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King Plush moves

King Plush, a leader in redemption merchandise, has moved to new facilities. Here's where you can find them: 1062 East Del Amo Blvd., Carson, CA 90747; (310)608-7787; fax (310)638-3235. The toll-free number remains the same, (800) 473-3402, as well as the post office box, P.O. Box 4428, Carson, CA 90749.

Correction

In our news story about Paul Jacobs, owner of AmeriCoin, exclusive representative and import agent for Taito Corp., forming a new corporation called Milwaukee Coin Machine Inc., we inadvertently printed the wrong address. It should read 6020 N. 76th St. Milwaukee, WI 53218; (414)466-5544; fax (414)466-5567.

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ADA president Glenn Remick (c) congratulates Women's Doubles Open soft-tip first place winners Sandy Marshall (l) of Hampton, Va., and Donna Horsley of Newport News, Va.

ADA hosts 7th championship

The American Darters Association (ADA) welcomed over 700 of its members and their guests to Chicago, Ill., for the 7th Annual ADA National Dart Championship in late summer.

This amateur championship attracted players from all over the country competing in Singles, Doubles, Mixed Triples, and Team events in Draw, Men's, and Women's categories for over $60,000 in cash and awards.

The contest includes both electronic soft-tip and traditional English steel-tip divisions. According to the ADA, it is also the world's only championship that electronically scores all darts thrown in both steel-tip and soft-tip.

ADA members in the soft-tip division competed on 50 Valley *Cougar 8* machines. Valley Recreation Products is the official electronic machine manufacturer for the ADA regional and national championship series.

Accudart sponsored the "Sixties Shootout" event this year. The first ADA member to throw six consecutive triple 20s could have won $25,000 in cash. Unfortunately, no one accomplished the feat.

In addition to the competition, ADA's resident sports psychologist Dr. Gary Low provided two free clinics on how to improve dart skills through a series of mental exercises. Other activities include a tour of the Navy Pier and a Major League baseball game at Wrigley Field. ADA members also competed for prizes against world pro darter Dave Kelly.

For more information on the ADA, contact Glenn Remick, (314)625-8621; fax (314)625-2975, or e-mail (adadarts@inlink.com).

CashCode conducts survey

CashCode Co. has conducted market research on the benefits of a beltless bill validator design that the company says can save maintenance costs for amusement operators.

The study showed that on average, belt-driven bill validators incur an annual maintenance cost of $58 per unit. Authorized service centers recommend that belts be serviced at least once a year or every time the validator is in for service. Belts may need to be replaced up to three times per year in high-traffic locations.

CashCode officials said the study supports its claims that roller-based validators save maintenance costs over the life of the validators, mainly because rollers have a life span of up to seven years. CashCode created the amusement industry's first twin roller design to transport bills through the banknote pathway and is the only manufacturer to make roller-based validators, according to the company.

Leon Saltsov, senior vice president of engineering and manufacturing, said, "The study shows us how important it is to show operators what kind of costs can be incurred beyond an initial investment."

The study was produced by CashCode's in-house research staff in association with a market reserach firm. It was conducted in the form of a cost survey from March 1 to April 1 this year.

For more information, contact Paige Gamble, regional director of sales for CashCode Co., (800)250-9903, ext. 261.

WVMVA prepares for show

Leoma Ballard of the West Virginia Music & Vending Association tells us that the state association is gearing up for its annual convention and trade show Oct. 29-31 at the Ramada Inn in South Charleston, W.Va.

All association members and their families are invited to attend. The agenda includes meetings, exhibits, and evening social events. For more information, call (304)949-3289; fax (304)949-3289.

Pinball Expo extravaganza

The 14th annual Pinball Expo will take place Oct. 22-25 at the Ramada Hotel O'Hare in Rosemont, Ill. Attendees are in for a treat with three flip out pinball tournaments, exhibits featuring games for sale and to play, autograph sessions with industry VIPs, an art contest, factory tour, fact-filled seminars, backglass contest, and auction.

The event begins with a tour of Genesis Inc., manufacturer of pinball ramps, bottom arches, and other components for the major pinball producers. The company is also credited with the concept and design of Sega Pinball's showcase backbox. Genesis also designed and manufactured "Playing for Keeps," which was created for the Museum of the Rockies. This one-of-a-kind game can be seen during the tour of the Genesis facility.

This year's event will include the Make-A-Wish Charity Auction as well as a special tribute to Richard Bueschel, who passed away this year. Mark Ritchie, pinball designer and former director of engineering for Capcom, will be the guest speaker.

The Flip Out tournaments are made possible by Gary Stern and Joe Kaminkow of Sega Pinball. For more information, call (330)369-1192 or (800)323-FLIP.

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A new wonder comes to Orlando

Wonder Works in Orlando is built upside down.

Wonder Works, a new interactive entertainment center located in downtown Orlando, bills itself as "a top-secret scientific research laboratory that was located on an uncharted island in the Bermuda Triangle, swept up by a mysterious tornado, and carried all the way to International Drive in Orlando, where it landed upside down on top of a warehouse."

At Wonder Works visitors can experience over 75 hands-on interactive events ranging from virtual reality to natural disasters to simulation machines to science-based experiments. You can cross the Bridge of Fire and find out what it feels and looks like when 250,000 watts of electricity make your hair stand on end—literally.

There is a waterfall where water flows straight up, against the force of gravity, and one of nature's most powerful storms takes place in the Hurricane Hole. The third floor features a large laser tag arena (Lazer Works) and virtual arcade, and you can enjoy casual Italian dining daily at Mazzarella's Pizzaria.

Admission prices are as follows (children's prices are in parentheses): Wonder Works $12.95 ($9.95), Lazer Works (one game) $5.95 ($5.95), Wonder Works & Lazer Works Combo (includes admission to Wonder Works and one laser tag game) $16.95 ($13.95). Wonder Works is located in the Pointe-Orlando shopping complex, (407) 351-8800; fax (407)352-6624.

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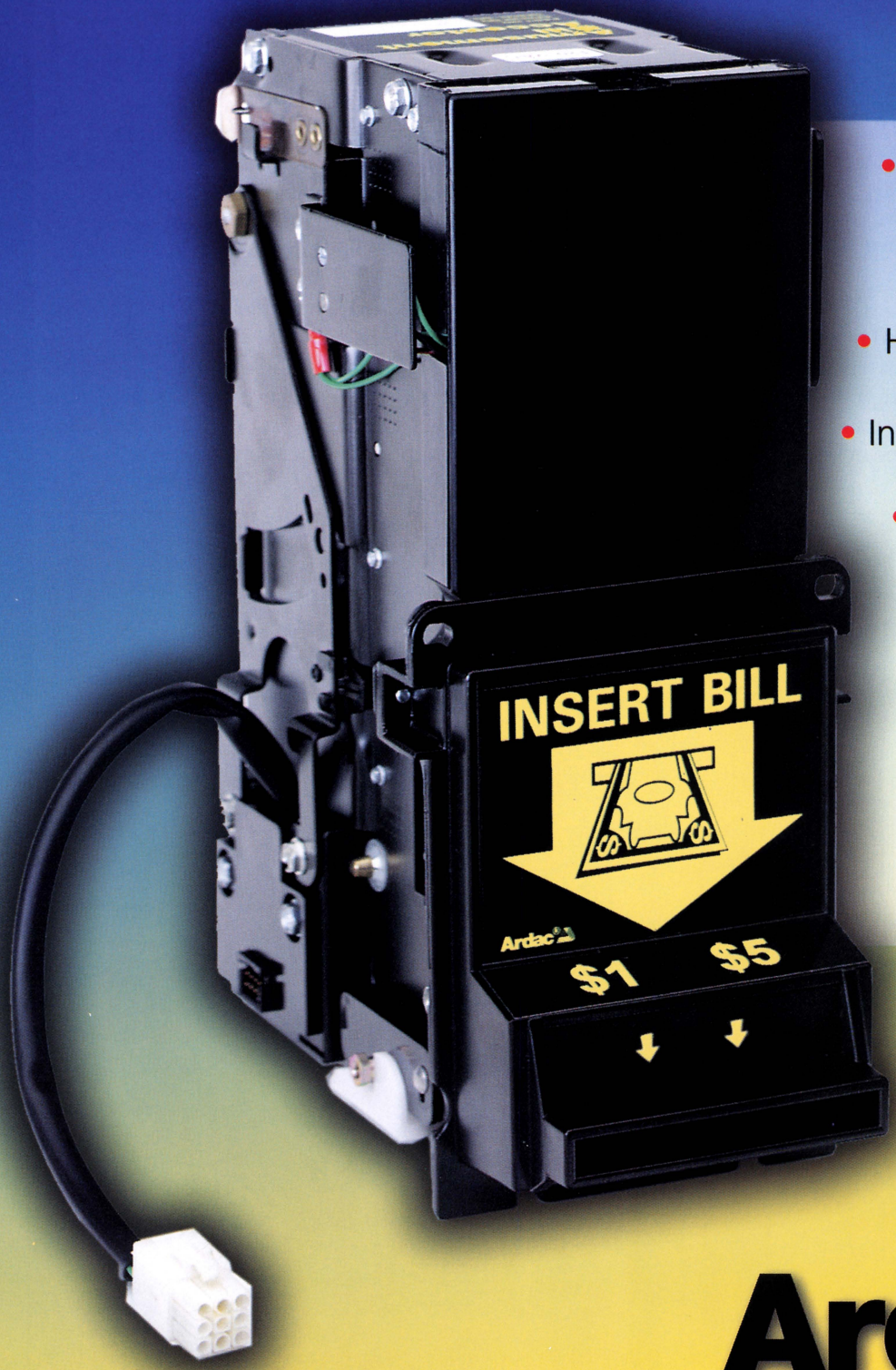

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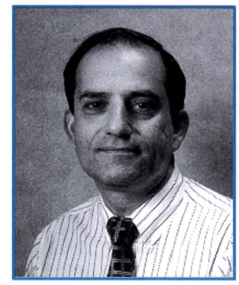
Changes at Cleveland Coin

There have been some changes at Cleveland Coin, beginning with Herman Fox being named president and Ron Gold assuming the position of chief executive officer and chairman of the board. According to Fox, that means that Gold will cut back from a 120-hour work week to a mere 80!

Another significant move, according to Fox, is Jay Bender being named vice president of sales. Fox said, "Jay is an 11-year veteran with Cleveland Coin. I hired him right out of Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh where he received a BS in industrial management. Jay has moved through a variety of different sales positions with us, gradually assuming more and more responsibility. His most recent position was vice president of vending."

Bottom, (l-r): Jay Bender, Herman Fox, and Ron Gold; top (l-r): John Coleman, Bruce Hoffman, Bob Muniak, and Rick Bevilaqua.

Tom Revolinsky



Alex Shaheen

Cleveland Coin also announced two more appointments: Alex Shaheen to the post of vice president of the wholesale toy division and Tom Revolinsky to vice president of operations. Shaheen runs the toy division, CCME Wholesale Toys, as a separate company within Cleveland Coin. Fox noted, "Alex has developed a thriving business in his four years with the company. The success of our toy business has necessitated moving into a new 30,000-square-foot facility, which we opened in September." Fox added that the company has a new toll free number dedicated exclusively to the toy division: (800)659-1417.

Fox praised Revolinsky's unique talents: "Tom's unique blend of accounting and special forces training have allowed us to hold our own against the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune in the arcade business. Tom has also been with us for four years."

LAZER-TRON HOT REDEMPTION HITS!

TWISTER™

Twister is the slowest BIG money game in the industry. Coins roll round and round until hitting one of the targets. Some coins stay in play over 20 seconds. Hit all 7 targets and you win the Progressive Bonus!

Size: 32.5" W x 37.5" D x 45" H
Wt. 300 lbs.

MATCH EM UP™

Match Em Up is the hot new skill stop game that challenges players reflexes to stop the rotating lights on matching fruit symbols. Each time the player stops the light, one of the 3 spinning reels stops on the same symbol. Match three 7's to win the Progressive Bonus!
*Includes Seat

Size: 25¼" W x 50" D x 73" H
Wt. 200 lbs.

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Video Redemption System

VRS is the first true redemption game **SYSTEM**. Operators can purchase a VRS cabinet and rotate in new games for years to come. New game kits will cost under $1000. The system includes hit games, Solar Spin®, Miners Revenge®, Slide Master™, Chip Away™ and more. New games will be introduced every few months!

Size: 25¼" W x 38" D x 74½" H
Wt. 250 lbs.

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Prize Zone is one of the most exciting games in the industry for both arcade and street operators. This multi-game system features 12 skill based video redemption games including great arcade style games, sports games, quiz games and solitaire games. A can't miss purchase for any location!

Size: 25¼" W x 38" D x 74½" H
Wt. 300 lbs.

ROLL - A - RAINBOW™

Roll A Rainbow is a hot new ball roll down game. Players try to roll balls into each of the target slots without going in the same slot twice. The more slots they light, the more they win. This game has terrific play appeal to kids and adults and has consistently been the top earning roll down on location.

Size: 25¼" W x 38" D x 74½" H
Wt. 250 lbs.

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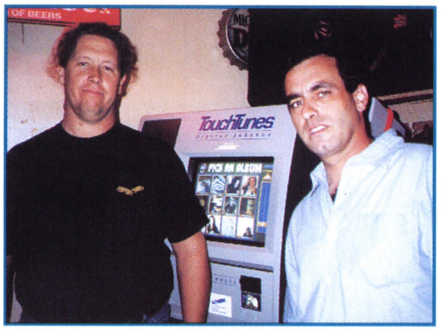
TouchTunes on location

At the Crossroads Bar in Baltimore, Md., "Bang" Warren (c) learns about the new jukebox from TouchTunes' Mark Gross (l) and Dan Clarton.



"Fuzzy," the manager of the Eagle in Quakerstown, Pa., and Mike Witson of U-Neek Enterprises

Customers Scott Pantall and April Mullin enjoy the tunes at the Irish Pub in Bartimore, Md., as TouchTunes Dan Clarton (r) looks on.

John Margold of TouchTunes sent these photos of the first TouchTunes digital jukeboxes placed on location. He said, "Well, we've really made it. Lots of companies plan to deliver a product, but here are the pictures that prove that we have done what we said we would do!"

The first TouchTunes jukeboxes were placed in Maine, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. More deliveries are planned in New York,, New Jersey, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Florida, Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, Iowa, Nebraska, Washington, Oregon, and California.

The night manager at the Eagle, one of the first locations, said, "The sound is great. Already I can tell that my customers love it."

Cost of Wisconsin heads South

Cost of Wisconsin, a 40-year-old full-service design/build firm specializing in the amusement industry, has opened its Orlando, Fla.-based Central Florida Sales and Marketing Division. It also established a manufacturing plant in Okahumpka, Fla., open since July 1997. It is currently working on projects for Universal Studios Florida, Bass Pro Shops, and various miniature golf facilities.

The company will continue to deliver full-service specialty construction, artistry, and consultation for miniature golf courses, zoological exhibits, aquariums, and museums. Cost also offers theme development for all industries.

Jeffrey Sheiber, with seven years of experience in the sports and entertainment field, directs this new division. His responsibilities will be to facilitate the demands and requests of customers in the Southeastern United States, South America, and the Caribbean.

The new division is located at 6990 Lake Ellenor Drive, Suite #103, Orlando, FL 32809. The phone number is (407)816-5275; toll-free (800) 778-0071; fax (407) 816-5276; Web site (www.costof wisconsin.com). ▲

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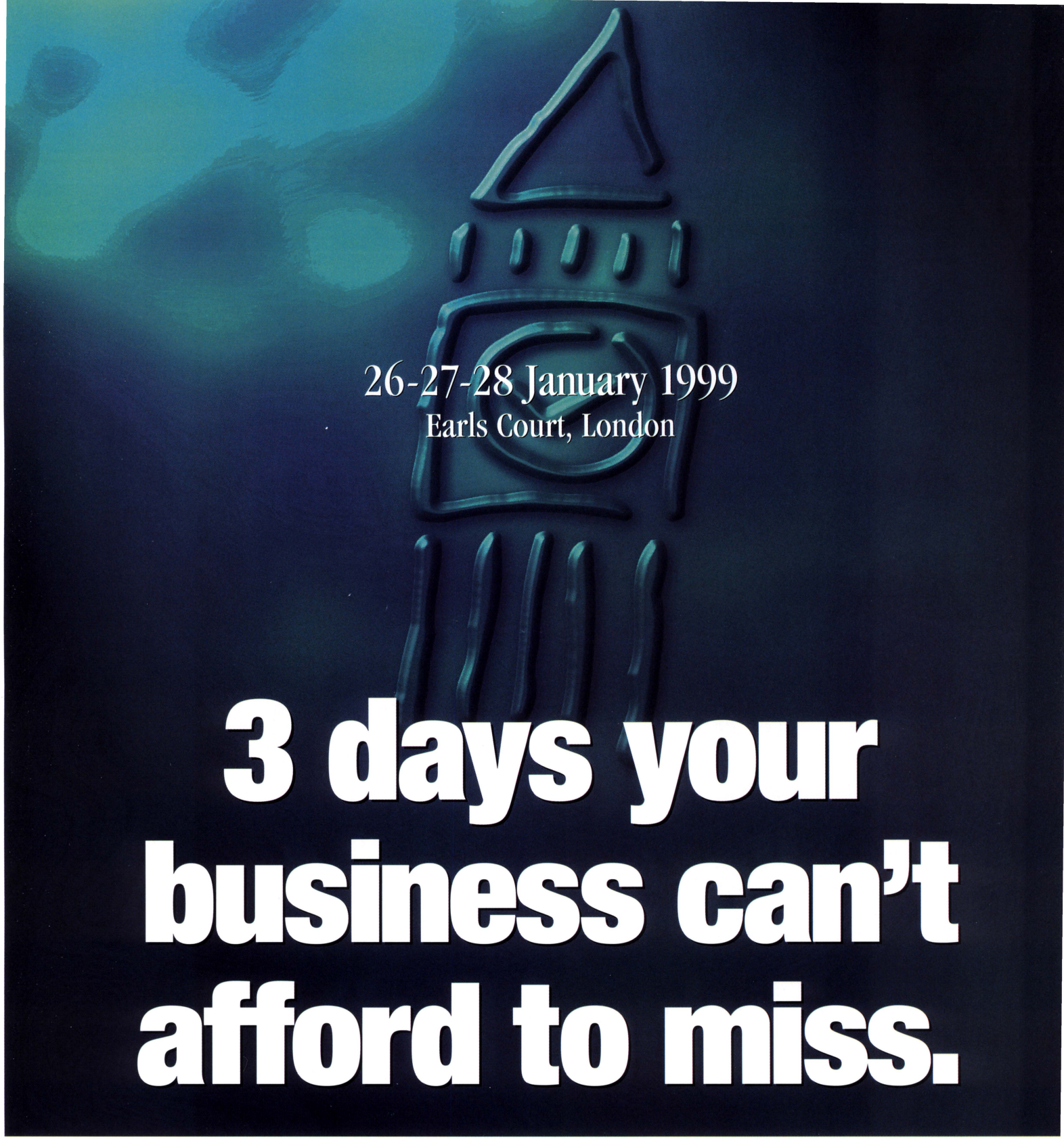

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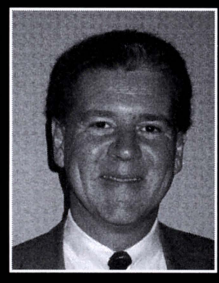
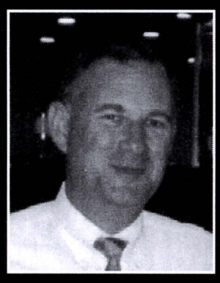
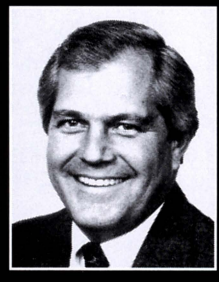


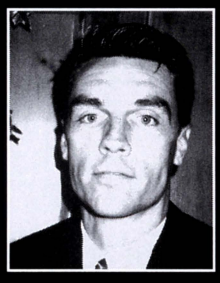
GEORGE MCAULIFFE



DENNIS SABLE

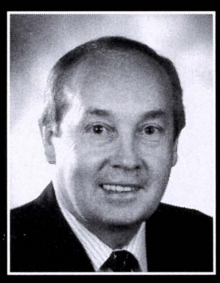


R. DAVID CLAYTON



COLIN WALSH

CONNIE BALL



ALAN SUITOR

Paul Wiederaenders, a long-time industry veteran, has joined Bulldog Amusements to handle accounts east of the Mississippi. Paul has experience in operating, distribution, and manufacturing. Paul can be reached at (815)625-8700.

In other news at Bulldog, president Todd Cravens announced that after eight years with the company, **Marguerite Kirby** has left. He explained, "She has some wonderful opportunities coming her way. I'm sure we'll be seeing a lot more of her. Marguerite was an invaluable asset to Bulldog, because she worked well with all our customers. We wish her nothing but the best." At press time we got word that Marguerite will be working for Merit handling the Northwest region. She can be reached through Merit, (215)639-4700.

Family Golf Centers has named **George McAuliffe** as vice president and general manager of its Family Entertainment Center division. Before this new post, McAuliffe was president of the consulting firm Pinnacle Entertainment Group, as well as the two companies with which he will remain involved: Pinnacle Entertainment Inc., a game operating company, and Pinnacle Entertainment Marketing Inc., a company pursuing a national advertising program for family and location-based entertainment centers.

McAuliffe's career includes serving as chief operating officer of Edison Brothers Entertainment and as a director and past president of the International Association of Family Entertainment Centers (IAFEC).

Bill Reitzig, senior vice president of Family Colf Centers, said, "We are delighted that George is joining us. His experience, expertise, and leadership abilities will serve us well as we expand our successful FEC facilities in the future. He will be responsible for managing the operation of our centers, purchasing games and attractions, and handling vendor relations." McAuliffe can be reached at the Family Golf Centers headquarters in Melville, N.Y., (516)634-1880; fax (516)884-0918.

Dennis Sable has been named director of sales for Stricor Inc., maker of motion-based out-of-home video entertainment systems. Sable was previously director of sales for GreyStone Technology, maker of PC games and virtual reality systems. Said Sable, "I am looking forward to a long and mutually prosperous relationship with Stricor." He will be working from a San Diego, Calif., office and can be reached at (619)676-0698; e-mail (dsable@san.rr.com).

R. David Clayton of Automatic Food Service Inc. has been named general convention chairman for the upcoming National Automatic Merchandisers Association (NAMA) National Expo at the Lakeside Center at McCormick Place in Chicago, Ill., Oct. 15-17.

Additional chairmen charged with handling specific areas of the convention are: **Colin Walsh** of Coin-Cafe Inc., convention program; **Connie Ball** of Wes-Tex Vending Co., spouse program; and **Alan Suitor** of Automatic Products International Ltd., trade show. NAMA president James Rost commented, "This is a very strong team. We're confident we will have an exciting and successful show in Chicago." For more on the Expo, contact NAMA, (312)346-0370. ▲

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Game Dimensions:
Depth: 78" (1.98m)
(with ramp)
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(with marquee)
Weight: 965 Lbs.
(438 Kg)

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Depth: 72" (1.83m)
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1 **VNEA Mascot "Charlie Cougar"** was on hand at VNEA's 10th Anniversary Charter Holder Workshop in Bay City, Mich. Over 85 owners and league coordinators from over 45 different charter holders from 18 states and Canada met for the workshop, held at the Bay Valley Hotel and Resort. The two-day workshop consisted of seminars, speakers, and panels on such topics as starting leagues, event location, fundraising and sponsors, tournaments, and new players.

2 **Saturday evening at the VNEA workshop**, the craps table was abuzz during the ever-popular Vegas Night. The meeting rooms were converted into a mini Las Vegas, where craps tables, roulette, black jack tables, and more were set up for Charter Holder members to take chances on some great prizes.

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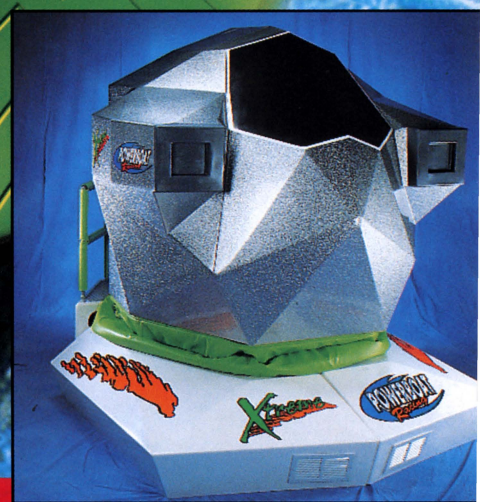

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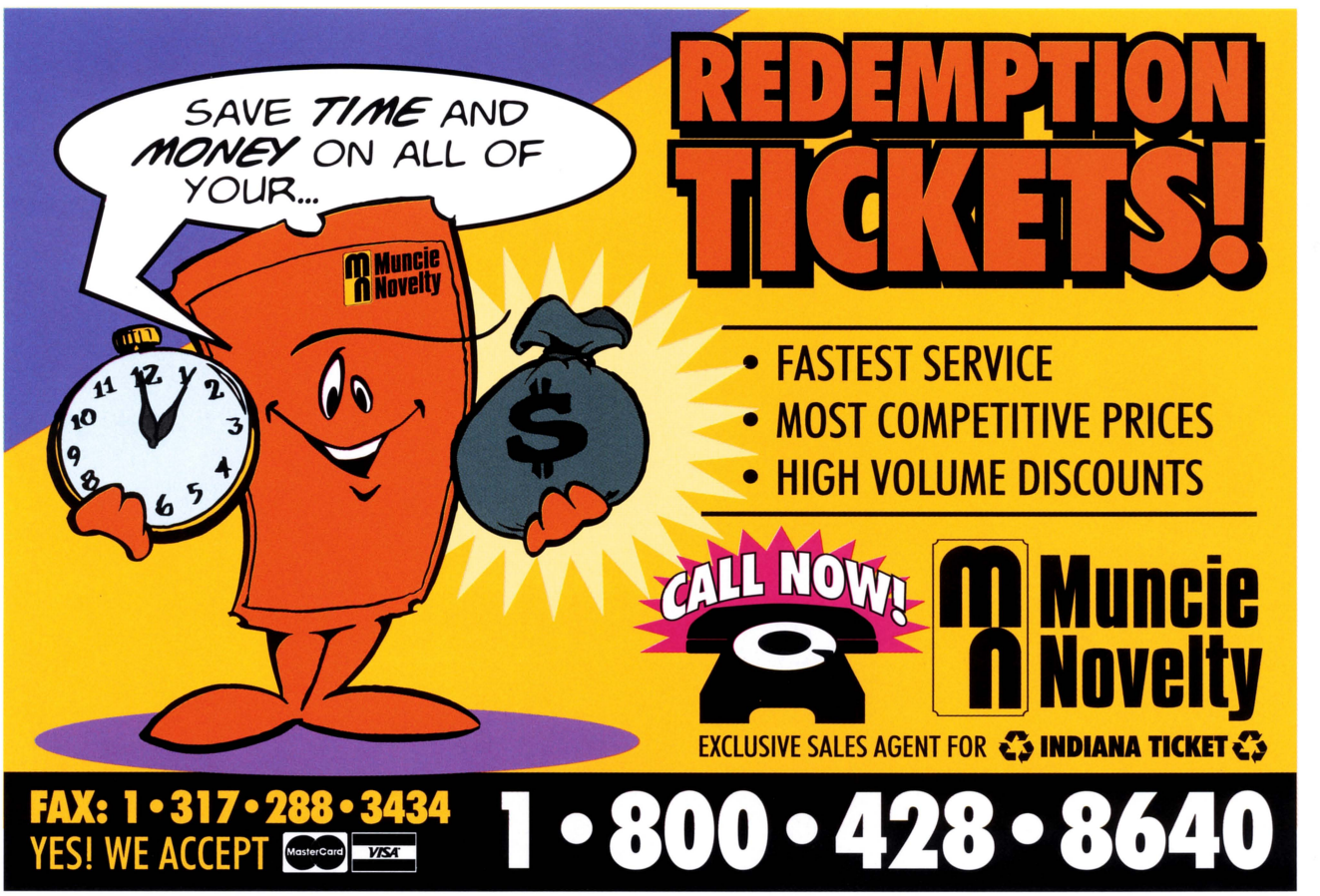
3 **AMOA director** Manley Lawson's daughter, Kim, was married in Ballynure, Northern Ireland August 15, the same day her grandparents Wesley and Margaret Lawson celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Wesley and Margaret renewed their vows during the ceremony. The reception, which followed, was held at the Belfast Castle.

4 **AMOA past president,** Wesley Lawson (c), flanked by son and AMOA director, Manley Lawson (r), and AMOA vice president, Rich Holley. ▲



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Street Fighter Alpha 3

Capcom Coin-Op has released *Street Fighter Alpha 3* to challenge newcomers and avid Alpha fans alike. This newest CPS II System one- or two-player kit features multi-level action from 25+ characters—the returning Alpha crew and three new arrivals to the series, Cody (Final Fight), Mika, and Karen. Possible hidden characters increase the level of competition.

The player-selectable combo-isms—X-ism gives you one super combo, Z-ism allows multiple super combos, and V-ism enables players to create their own enhanced custom combo—provide a customized style of play, while the Guard Breaker feature provides more aggressive game play.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Capcom Coin-Op, (408)774-0500; fax (408)522-5331; Web site (www.capcom.com).

Site 4

Atari has introduced *Site 4*, a light gun game, employing the same technology as *Area 51* and *Maximum Force*. It was developed by Mesa Logic, which also did *Area 51* and *Maximum Force*.

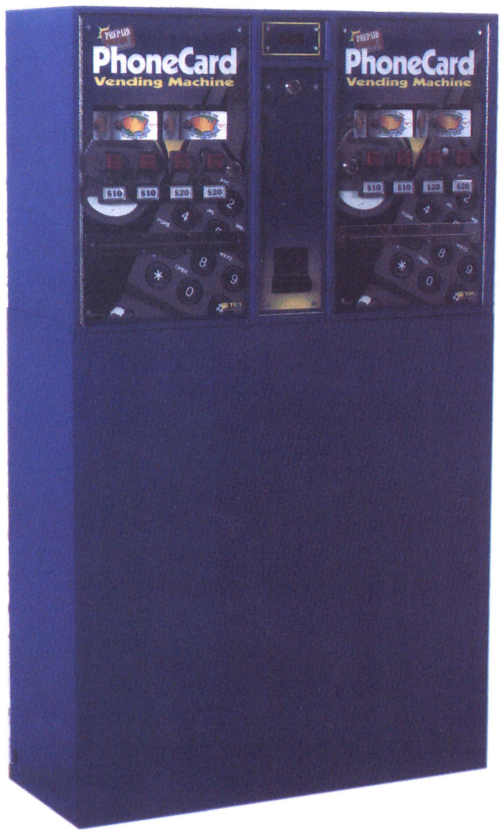
Area 51 introduced players to the exploits of STAAR, the top secret alien-busting special forces team, whose mission was to stop the invasion plans of the fearsome alien parasite from the planet Kronn. Now the STAAR team has learned that the Kronn alien species was not wiped out during the first battle at *Area 51* as previously thought.

This time, players will undergo intense physical and mental training before going to war against the Kronn. In each of 18 different training waves, players will hone their reflexes and sharpen their targeting skills in preparation for the coming invasion of the *Site 4* labs. They must pass six before advancing to the end battle.

Some of the same aliens return from *Area 51*. Now, each one takes multiple shots to bring down because they have gotten tougher. The aliens now have a boss, the big bad Kronn Queen. She stands nearly 20 feet tall and has a demonic look and appendages that hurl fireballs.

Site 4 will be available in three configurations: a dedicated 39" showcase, a 25" classic upright, and a universal kit.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Atari, (408)434-3700; fax (408)434-3776; Web site (www.atarigames.com).



Dynamite Cop

Sega Enterprises Inc. USA introduces *Dynamite Cop*, a new production of the *Die Hard Arcade* team. In *Die Hard Arcade*, players chose from two characters. Now there are three different ones to choose from.

Dynamite Cop also features more missions, three compared to the one in *Die Hard*. Each mission has its own unique ending. Collecting power-up items enables players to use new combos, up to a 13-combo attack. Adopting multiple cameras enhances the multi-lateral dimensions and angles.

There are even more weapons with a choice of hand grenades, machine guns, vacuum cleaners, refrigerators, and sushi! The most powerful weapon is the anti-ship missile that has an enormous blast leaving a mushroom cloud that hits all enemies.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Sega, (650)802-3100; fax (650)802-3120; Web site (www.sega.com).

Card Master-8

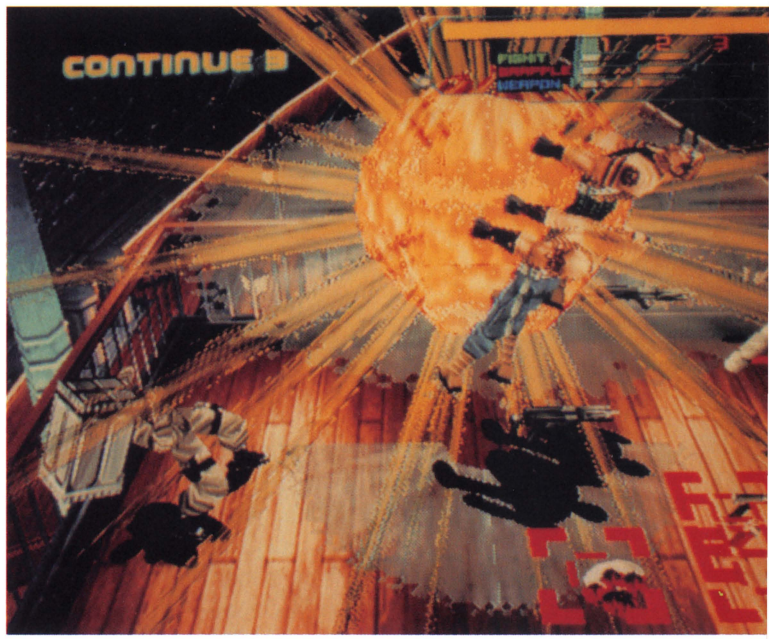
Technik Mfg. introduces the newest addition to its line of pre-paid phone card machines. The new *Card Master-8* is a machine that will offer the highest capacity in Technik's line of phone card machines with 390 per row for a total of 3,120 cards.

With easy adjustment, flexible pricing per row, and resettable or non-resettable accounting, this machine is perfect for those looking to expand their vending business.

The *Card Master-8* offers a wide range of options including matching base pedestal, internal modem, high-security locks, serial interface board, portable serial printer, alarm system, and Coinco locking stacker.

The *Card Master-8* is available in red or blue for the cabinet and base, and offers labels with Hispanic lettering and ethnic graphics.

For more information, contact Technik, (888)832-4645 or (402)564-3191; fax (402)564-0406; Web site (www.technikmfg. com).

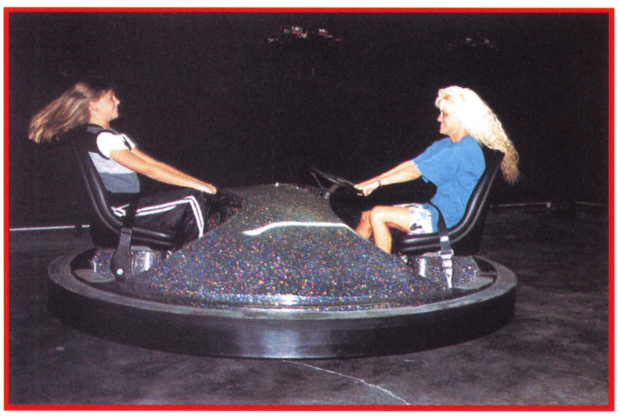


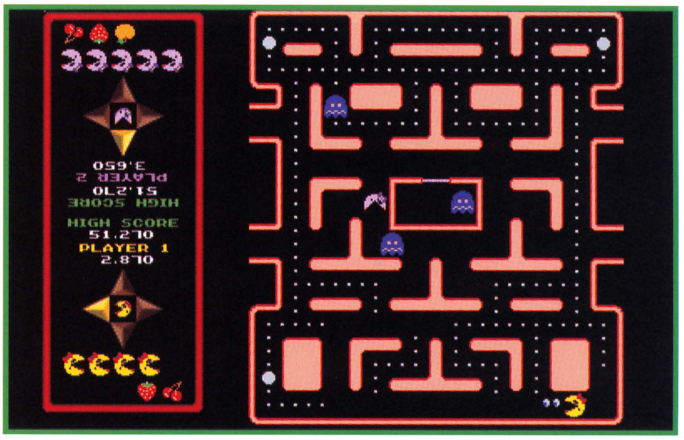
Flying Saucer bumper car

Bumper Buggy is offering the *Flying Saucer*, a two-seater bumper car. It features a fiberglass body, battery power, remote start and stop, and it's designed to be run on any smooth surface and for quick battery exchange.

The patented drive train gives it the ability to spin, creating centrifugal force for the rider.

For more information, contact Bumper Buggy, (501)362-2354; fax (501)362-3693.





Pac-Man and Ms. Pac-Man

Creative Electronics and Software has brought back two of our favorite games, *Pac-Man* and *Ms. Pac-Man*, in its Galaxy Games multi-cartridge, cocktail table system. Both games feature two-player simultaneous action, and every level and sound effect are faithfully recreated to satisfy even hard-core pac-maniacs.

Every system comes with seven standard games, player-selectable language, pedestal base, four expansion slots, operator adjustable game and pricing features, user-friendly audit mode, 19" horizontal monitor, customizable advertising screen, dollar bill acceptor-ready, one free cartridge, and a one-year warranty.

For more information, contact CES, (847)695-0023; fax (847)695-0483.

Fooz Breaker

Amazing Amusements introduces the *FoozBreaker*. It's interactive and competitive play for two to four players. The object of the game is to score a goal with the vended product (850-600 count gum, jawbreakers, super balls, or round capsules) by using a rod-mounted man to shoot the ball past the opponent's defense into the goal area. Once a goal is scored the product ramps around to the side that scored the goal. Thus the company's slogan "*FoozBreaker*, the sport where the winner keeps the ball."

FoozBreaker is being marketed through Olive Entertainment. For more information, call (888)281-7710. ▲

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Claim Jumper is our exciting new and innovative skill redemption game that is taking the industry by storm! Featuring 18 train cars for 18 progressive jackpots that up to 4 players compete for! It's a fast train ride to riches, so stake your claim now!
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DVD PLAYING on the HORIZON

Although this new technology may take some time to be widely adopted by consumers, nearly all parties involved expect DVD to be the dominant media format for films, games, software and data storage within 10 years. Some estimate that annual worldwide DVD replication will reach 1.28 billion discs by the year 2002. But the question we ask is "how will it impact our industry?"

DVD is a new optical disc technology which many people expect to replace the audio CD, videotape, laserdisc, CD-ROM, and video game cartridges in the coming years. Its makers used to say that DVD stood for Digital Video Disc, but then they changed it to Digital Versatile Disc, being a more general term that doesn't limit its applications to video. Of course, almost all of us are slow to change with the introduction of new technology, so first a little background.

The new medium, if adopted, would likely encompass home entertainment, computers, and business information with a single digital medium. Generally speaking, digital technology reduces vast amounts of information into one bitstream that requires far less storage space than other mediums do. A single DVD can hold up to 17 gigabytes of video, audio, or other information. Compared to the current CD-ROM disk of the same physical size and holding only 600 megabytes, the DVD holds more than 28 times as much information.

Currently, DVD has widespread support from all major electronics companies, all major computer hardware companies, and about half of the major movie and music studios, which says much for its chances of being adopted by consumers. Philips, the inventor of the CD, is one of the inventors of DVD, which was first announced as an industry standard in November 1995.

Some CD-ROM drive manufacturers plan to cease CD-ROM drive production after a few years in favor of DVD-ROM drives. Because DVD-ROM drives can read CD-ROMs, there is a compatible forward migration path. Also, it is expected that eventually DVD players will read audio CDs, though this is not actually required by the DVD spec. However, DVD-ROMs are not readable by CD-ROM drives.

The transition toward DVD from CD-ROM, videodisc, or audio CD, may require some coaxing. Some industry insiders have suggested that the best solution for now is probably something like what Access did with "Tex Murphy: Overseer" when they included both a CD-ROM version and an enhanced DVD version of the game in the same package for roughly the same price. It is thought that when both media are included, the user has an incentive to upgrade his hardware.

Toshiba SD-M1202 DVD-ROM

Play Meter spoke with four executives in the coin-op industry about their reactions to the emergence of DVD and their opinions of the new medium's future.

According to Richard Ditton, vice president at Incredible Technologies Inc., DVD's quality of audio and video resolution is far superior to other media, and the compact size of DVD adds to its appeal. However, Ditton indicated his pessimism for DVD where

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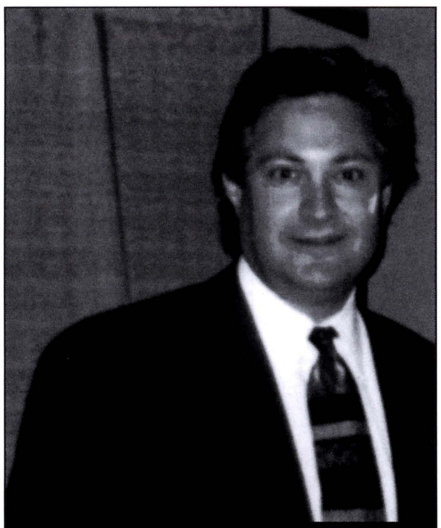
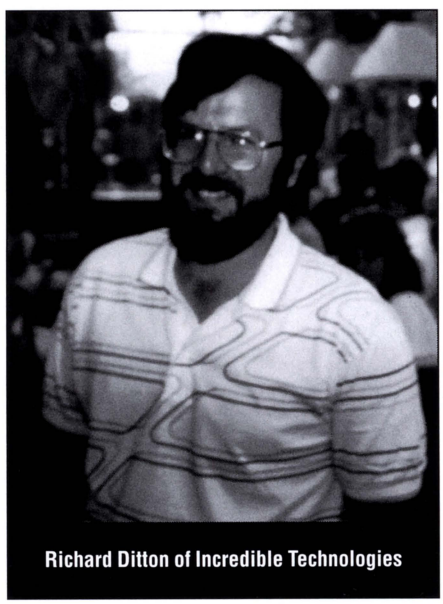


John Margold of TouchTunes Jukebox

Joel Friedman of Rowe International



Richard Ditton of Incredible Technologies

coin-op applications are concerned. Though he applauds the new medium for home use, Ditton said that he believes that "the rugged environment in which many coin-op games are located for play would not be conducive to an efficient use of PCs, let alone DVD-equipped PCs."

Furthermore, Ditton said that he couldn't name one PC-based program that can be left on without requiring rebooting. PCs suffer from heat problems, according to Ditton, and the Pentium runs so hot that fans are required. None of these issues point to probable coin-op applications for DVD.

"DVD has no standard protocol at this point as there is with other forms of data compression," John Margold, vice president of sales/marketing at TouchTunes Jukebox Inc., told us. "Digital downloading is using MPEG standard, but DVD is an open format; so we wouldn't be comfortable using it for anything."

Paul Dussault, director of video engineering at Williams Electronic Games Inc., echoed Margold's caution. "Until the winning version of DVD emerges, it's hard to hang your hat one way or another, not unlike the BETA/VHS battle that we saw in the past," Dussault said.

"Picture it as a massive CD," Margold said. "Whatever limitations an audio CD has are present in DVD:

"The possibility of building a combination-jukebox, which would allow the operator to choose his ratio of audio CDs to DVD-video discs, is exciting to me."

skipping, dust, dirt, realignment, etc. And the CD has been a bit of a headache for us."

That pessimism, however, is certainly not entirely pervasive in the jukebox manufacturing community. "I think DVD is going to be a very good product for the jukebox industry," said Joel Friedman, executive vice president of Rowe International Inc. "The initial DVD roll out has been of movies, and DVD was slowed down because of other media competition. Also, many movie studios hesitated to license product until it could be guaranteed that there would be no piracy. But, I have always been a great champion of video music. DVD is exciting because it is a CD disc. My hope is that we can build a combination jukebox, one that plays both audio CDs and music video DVDs.

"The possibility of building a combination-jukebox, which would allow the operator to choose his ratio of au-

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dio CDs to DVD-video discs, is exciting to me," Friedman continued. "The main reason I see it happening is pricing. You can premium-price DVD plays. Second, from the standpoint of content, people are growing up on videos and are beginning to go into the traditional jukebox locations. I think that generation wants to see as well as hear its music. But some people, particularly older generations, may find video intrusive, so they may want only audio."

According to Friedman, Rowe hopes to create an upgrading kit to add to the older, normal jukebox, or see a jukebox come about that plays both kinds of discs. "When any of this happens is only a matter of when the record companies decide to release their products on DVD," Friedman said. "We have to be very careful not to fall in love with technology, because we are really driven by what happens in the retail market."

"From [Williams'] viewpoint, it's just another storage medium," Dussault told Play Meter. "I can't comment on what we have going on right now, but we are very aware of the technology as well as its cost implications. Even in the home game market, most $1,000 PCs do not have the DVD drive. It will be some time before that level of technology migrates down to most consumers. But when it becomes cost effective, it will move into coin-op. Right now it doesn't make sense to put an expensive drive in a game. I'm not sure the PC-based arcade is even cost effective."

Among game players in both the home and arcade market, there seems to be a widespread feeling that DVD games will at first only exist to show off the medium's new capabilities. As more games are released, DVD-ROMs will undoubtedly add richer video, more levels, more textures, additional crafts, and better sound. Currently, however, few games take advantage of DVD.

For now it seems the best reason for PC game makers to choose DVD over CD-ROM is to avoid disc swapping. Many game titles span several CD-ROMs. Unless the CD-ROMs contain duplicated information, travelling between a location visited early in the game and one found later can involve swapping back and forth between discs. This is an annoying aspect of adventure games, because it shatters the illusion of reality. Players like to be drawn into the gaming universe. When a discordant screen pops up asking for disc #2, the player is jolted and the mood is spoiled.

Unfortunately, the DVD-drive technology itself isn't in wide use, so releasing games or movies on DVD still limits sales. Nonetheless, like many other games, Red Orb Entertainment's "Riven: the Sequel to Myst," the best-selling game on CD-ROM in 1997, has been significantly enhanced in the DVD-ROM version for the PC and Macintosh G3 platforms. It features improved audio and video and an exclusive behind-the-scenes video of the making of the game, all on a single disc. Furthermore, Sony Computer Entertainment president Teruhisa Tokunaka has said that the highly anticipated PlayStation 2 may arrive on the market as a DVD-based console.

The increasing number of games being released on DVD is not the only telling sign of things to come for this new medium. Windows 98 is the first operating system with inherent support for DVD. This will almost certainly establish DVD as an industry standard. There is even a magazine called Versadisc, to be published on DVD and distributed through bundling with DVD-related products, in its initial production stages and set for a November 1998 premiere.

Even if DVD doesn't soon reach the coin-op industry directly, the new medium's effect on consumers' will likely be to alter their expectations of what constitutes high quality visual imagery, audio reproduction, and data storage. Keep your ears open about the introduction of DVD into the marketplace. There is sure to be a lot more information coming our way. ▲

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PAS UPDATE

Bonnie Theard

Support is strong for the Parental Advisory System

A year-long effort to reach every industry level has resulted in a staggering number of stickers and posters making their way into locations around the country. But there is still work to be done.

It may be prophetic that the first letters in our industry's Parental Advisory System spell PAS. Strict compliance is the goal, and a passing grade in the eyes of Congress will be the outcome as manufacturers, distributors, and operators unite to do the right thing.

Manufacturers

Where new games are concerned, the ball is in the manufacturers' court. According to Mike Rudowicz of Konami of America, also president of the American Amusement Machine Manufacturers Association (AAMA), "Everyone has done a fantastic job at the association level (AAMA, AMOA, IAFEC, and IAAPA). Major manufacturers are sending out posters in their shipments of both kits and dedicated games.

"The effort has been tremendous by everyone, and in a short period of time we were able to send out a significant number of posters and stickers. We probably have reached 60 to 70 percent of the market. Many manufacturers have incorporated, or are planning to incorporate, the advisory into their game artwork."

For its part, Konami has put the appropriate label in the artwork of its latest kit, *Fisherman's Bait.* "The labels will be incorporated into all our drawings and future artwork," said Rudowicz.

He acknowledged that while the associations cover a large percentage of the market, a significant number of operators are not members of any association and sometimes don't get the message. "The way we're trying to reach them is through distributors and trade publications," he said, "combined with manufacturers labeling new games at the start."

Rudowicz stated, "The whole thing is an educational effort—getting the word out to operators and educating the public—so parents are made aware of the issues and in turn can monitor and educate their children. That's where the final responsibility lies."

Frank Cosentino of Namco added, "Compliance on the new games is approaching 100 percent. AAMA member manufacturers are complying with the system and making sure the advisories are in the artwork of the games.

"Getting operators to go back in time to sticker older machines is not going to be an easy thing," he said. Cosentino believes in "becoming part of the solution."

He noted that the number of violent-rated games, as a percentage of total games available, decreases every year. He sees more sports games, race games, and non-violent games coming out. "Yes, we still have fighting games," said Cosentino. "But *Tekken 3*, for example, sustained its popularity with no blood in the game; the same for *Time Crisis II.* We classify them as violent-strong (red label) because we want to give the correct message."

Cosentino believes that "trying to shelter people from things doesn't work. We as a society need to get it under control."

All the national chains (entertainment centers) are on board, advised Cosentino, as well as discount retailers and other national locations, which will cover the majority of the games played by the public. "Progressive operators who buy more new equipment will have all their games with stickers soon," said Cosentino.

INDUSTRY ALERT:

The Coin-Operated Amusement Industry has made a commitment to the U.S. Congress that the below "Guide To Coin-Operated Video Games" -- depicting approved Parental Advisory Disclosure Messages -- will be posted in clear view at all locations where video games are found and which are frequented by children. These posters are being made available -- free of charge -- by AAMA, AMOA and IAFEC, and may be ordered by contacting your appropriate association.

GUIDE TO COIN-OPERATED VIDEO GAMES

The following Parental Advisory Disclosure Messages have been established for coin-operated video games to provide consumers with a description of game content.

SUITABLE FOR ALL AGES	**The content of this game is appropriate for game players of all ages.**
ANIMATED VIOLENCE MILD	**Contains scenes of violence involving cartoon-like characters in fantasy settings.**
ANIMATED VIOLENCE STRONG	**Contains scenes of violence involving cartoon-like characters in fantasy or life-like settings such as martial arts or sports activities.**
LIFE LIKE VIOLENCE MILD	**Contains scenes involving human-like characters engaged in combative activity.**
LIFE LIKE VIOLENCE STRONG	**Contains selected scenes involving human-like characters engaged in combative activity which may result in pain, injury and/or death to the depicted character.**
SEXUAL CONTENT MILD	**Contains sexually suggestive references or material.**
SEXUAL CONTENT STRONG	**Contains graphic depictions of sexual behavior and/or the human body.**
LANGUAGE MILD	**Contains commonly used four-letter words.**
LANGUAGE STRONG	**Contains strong four-letter expletives.**

AAMA
AMERICAN AMUSEMENT MACHINE ASSOCIATION

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT CENTERS
IAFEC

AMOA
Amusement & Music Operators Association

Concerns

Rachel Davies of Midway Mfg. is concerned about government intervention if compliance is not complete. "It's very important to keep the government from making decisions for us," said Davies.

[This summer, legislative proposals in Florida titled the "Children's Protection from Violence Acts" would have resulted in severe restrictions for the industry, making it unlawful for anyone under the age of 18 to play or see video games with graphic violence of almost any kind.]

"We can see how quickly government can get involved and seriously affect our business," said Davies. "We have a chance to prevent that through relatively simple things."

For Davies, it all comes down to responsibility: "We need to make sure the parents are informed in order to make the right decision. If we don't give them the tools to make that informed decision, then we've let ourselves down in the industry. We've come up with a system that puts the level of responsibility with the parents who make those informed choices. If we fail as an industry to use the sticker system, then we're failing our level of responsibility, and criticism can come firmly back on us."

Davies put it simply: "If the effort to put stickers on games and posters in locations (at no cost) can prevent everybody from getting inside our business, then I think it's worth it. We have to make that effort all around, or we deserve what we get. Every level of the industry has to participate. If operators don't think this is a real threat, I've got news for them. It really is. Why not buy into the program?"

Davies suggested that AAMA publish a catalog of older games and their proper ratings to provide more operator support. (An extensive list has been compiled; the latest edition appears at the end of this article.)

Elliott Portnoy, counsel for AMOA and AAMA, said, "The industry must take aggressive action to protect itself. If not, there are going to be some dark days ahead."

His position has been: "The industry's best defense against local regulation of video game content is to have a national system that is credible, comprehensive, and enjoys the support of Congress. If we fail to comply in every respect and at every level with our own system, we should expect there will be some very uncomfortable press and unfavorable regulation of the industry."

"The industry must take aggressive action to protect itself. If not, there are going to be some dark days ahead."

He reminded that this is an election year and that politicians are looking for someplace to put the blame for social ills. "This is not an issue that is going away," said Portnoy. "There is a continued effort to link violent acts on the part of young people with video games."

Distributing

Brady Distributing, which has offices in North Carolina, Tennessee, and Florida, adopted a policy nine months ago whereby it affixes stickers to older games brought in for service.

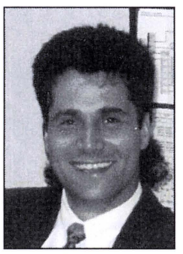
Jon W. Brady said, "Typically, all the games that we have for repair get stickers. When games go out as used and reconditioned, they have the proper stickers. We put them under the monitor backglass, header, or under the bezel in the graphic area so they are clearly visible." Stickers placed on top of the game or on top of the header do not hold up well, because when the game is cleaned the sticker will be wiped off.

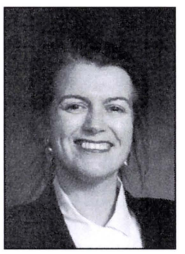
Brady Distributing follows the AAMA game list ratings. The list is fairly comprehensive, but some older games are not on it. For games not listed, the company suggests a rating and allows operators to use their own judgment.

Brady said, "We want to make the stickers available to everyone and make sure our industry is conforming to the policies. We've had a lot of calls from operators who want the stickers and want to comply. It's not being ignored by any means. We're doing what we can. I think most industry members are going to be in that same boat."

Lieberman Music Co. in Minnesota

Mike Rudowicz


Frank Cosentino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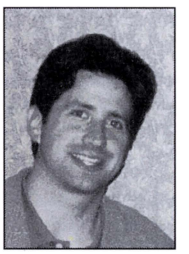
Jon W. Brady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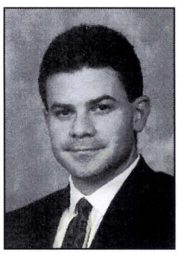
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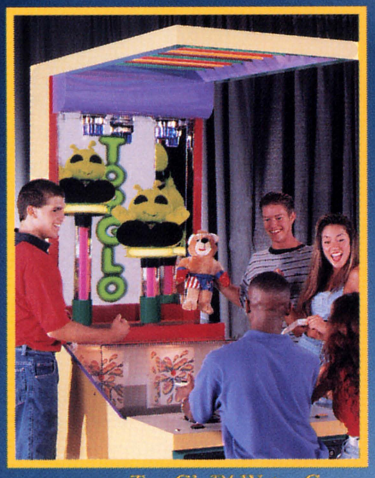

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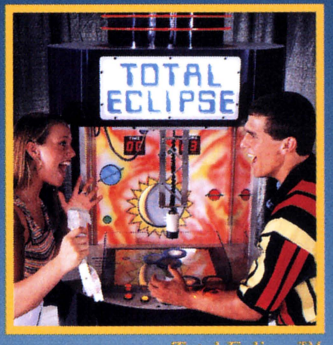

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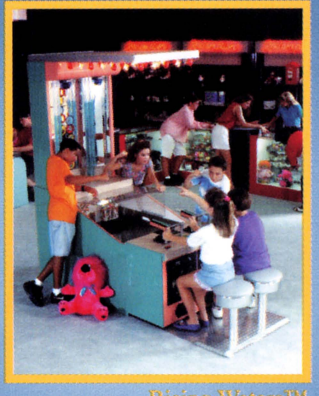

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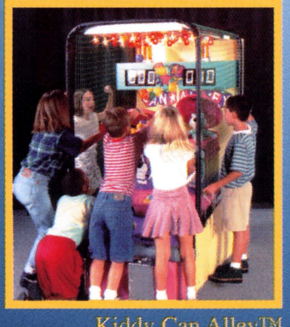

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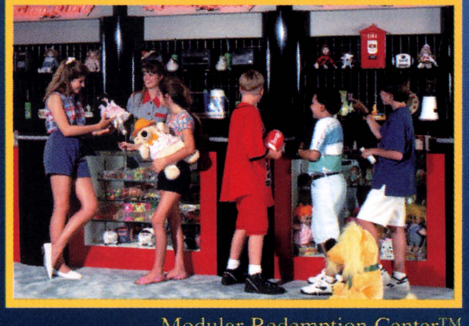

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Bob's Space Racers

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initiated a similar program 10 months ago. When new games arrive, if they don't come with the advisory, Lieberman will put the proper stickers inside the boxes before shipping to customers. Parts counters in the company's two offices prominently display the posters so customers can see what they need to have. Used or refurbished games also get the proper stickers, following AAMA guidelines, usually placed on the marquee (underneath where feasible).

In addition, the distributor has hosted seminars on PAS at its open houses and the state association board meeting, at which time then-AMOA president Don Hesch emphasized the importance of all games having the necessary stickers.

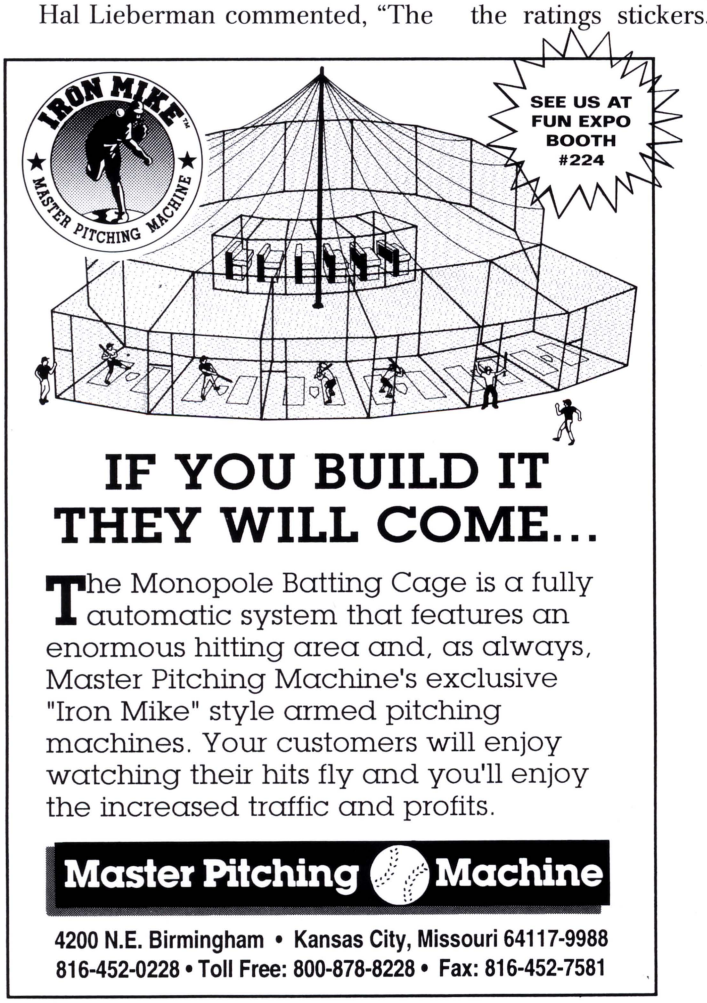
Hal Lieberman commented, "The combination of having these seminars at our open houses and our state gathering, plus seeing them on the new games, has heightened awareness. We also have a note at the bottom of every one of our invoices, informing customers that all their games must have the ratings stickers. It took a few months to get the word out, and it's picked up steam. We're seeing a fair amount of activity in requests for the stickers. We're doing our part to see that everyone participates and rates their games."

"We want to make the materials available to everyone and make sure our industry is conforming to the policies."

Lieberman credited incoming AMOA president Jim Stansfield with delivering a double-whammy on behalf of PAS by speaking to fellow Lieberman Music Co. customers about the system.

"I think this is a simple way of making sure we're in compliance with what Senators Kohl and Lieberman want us to do," said Lieberman. "Anyone who doesn't do it is asking for trouble. It's not difficult. What it will accomplish is keeping arcades open and flourishing with people playing games."

He added, "It may seem like a has-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sle, but when you look at what we may lose without compliance, it's a no-brainer."

More to accomplish

Frank Seninsky of Alpha-Omega Amusements, also AMOA first vice president and IAFEC board of directors member, pointed to distributors as the link to smaller operators. "All operators have to buy equipment from a distributor somewhere," he said.

Even though the four associations have good memberships, it is still only a percentage of the whole entertainment center industry. Seninsky observed, "Our main industry problem is getting to those people we don't know how to find. It's not a matter of something people don't want to do. It's more a case of 'I'm going to get around to that soon.' We put out fires all day at work. How do you stop and take care of everything?

"People have other problems in their businesses right now. They are focusing on staying alive, putting food on the table, and paying the bills. People are worried because there is a lot of consolidation going on."

One of the things that bodes well for the industry, Seninsky noted, is that there are fewer violent games being made. "As far as compliance is concerned, we have decent grades," said Seninsky. "We don't have an A-plus yet."

That A-plus is achievable only *if* the push for education continues and the stickers and posters make their way into locations.

Associations

How do you obtain the proper advisory materials? AAMA, AMOA, IAFEC, and IAAPA are doing everything they can to make posters and stickers available.

IAFEC executive director Carole Sjolander said there are a lot of family entertainment centers that are not members. They can still obtain posters from IAFEC; for stickers, the association refers them to local distributors. As of Sept. 2, IAFEC has sent a total of 551 posters to 55 companies.

Sjolander explained, "It is vital for the industry press to report on this issue and to reach those who are not our members. We are happy to provide the posters."

AMOA released the following figures: 48,959 stickers were sent to 96 companies, and 11,516 posters were sent to 156 companies, as of Sept. 1.

AAMA has sent out 257,977 stickers to 44 distributors and shipped 21,490 posters to 25 distributors and seven manufacturers, as of Aug. 10. Figures were not yet available from IAAPA.

Anyone wishing to obtain the Parental Advisory System posters and stickers can contact their local distributors or national organizations. ▲

Need PAS materials?

Contact:

AAMA
(847)290-9088
fax (847)290-9121
e-mail (aorlando@coin-op.org)

AMOA
(800)937-2662
(312)245-1021
fax (312)245-1085
e-mail (amoa@sba.com)

IAFEC
(603)464-6498
fax (603)464-6497
e-mail (iafec@aol.com)

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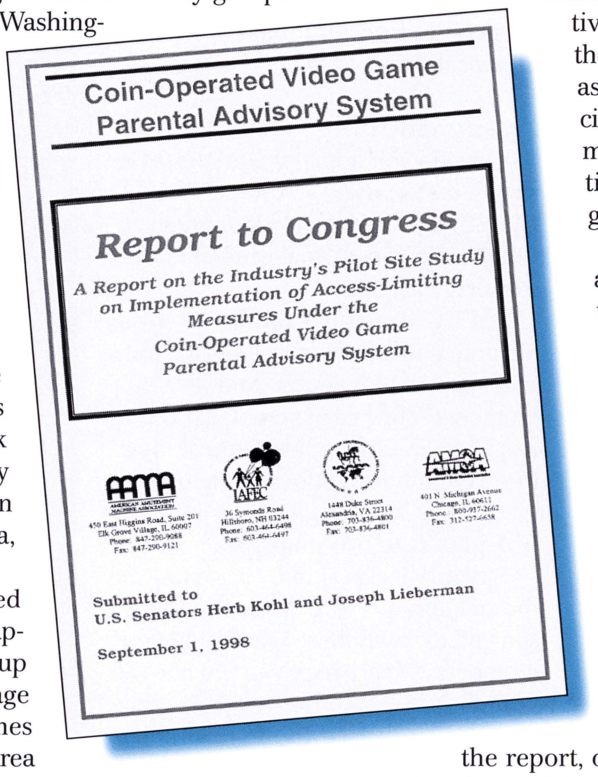
PAS UPDATE

SUMMARY: Report to Congress

Editor's note: As part of the coin-op industry's commitment to aggressive implementation of its Parental Advisory System (PAS), a test program was undertaken in the spring, the results of which were compiled and submitted to Sen. Herb Kohl and Joe Lieberman on Sept. 1.

Congress and the media have been carefully monitoring our industry since 1993 in regard to the issue of violence in video games. Over time, PAS was developed by AAMA in cooperation with AMOA and affiliated organizations and subsequently endorsed by Congress and advocacy groups. A late-July press conference in Washington, D.C., was an interim check-up. While the industry received good marks thus far, we are not out of the proverbial woods yet.



The AAMA, AMOA, IAAPA, and IAFEC's "Report on the Industry's Pilot Site Study on Implementation of Access-Limiting Measures Under the Coin-Operated Video Game Parental Advisory System" was the culmination of a six-week study from April 6 through May 17, 1998 at seven pilot sites in Connecticut, Illinois, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Wisconsin.

The locations were assigned one of four access-limiting approaches to implement: 1) group all games with a "strong" message in one area; 2) group all games with a "strong" message in one area and require a staff person to monitor game play and limit game play by young children; 3) group games with a "strong" message in one area and erect a temporary physical barrier; and 4) group games with a "strong" message in one area, erect a temporary physical barrier, and require a staff person to monitor game play and limit game play by young children.

The study found that parents praise the industry's initiative in providing information regarding the content and range of game choices available. Curiously, parents who accompanied their children to the study sites not only sometimes permitted their children to play games marked as having "strong"-rated content, but also played such games with their children.

"Strong" (i.e. red) messages actually increased game play and earnings, according to the study, "counter to the spirit and intent of the System and the Code of Conduct." Also, increasing staff personnel for purposes of monitoring and supervising game play was found to be financially burdensome to most locations.

The study found that in general the coin-op industry provides a diverse mix of games, "the majority of which are 'Suitable for All Ages.'" The most effective access-limiting measures were those that were already in place, such as game placement, purchasing policies of locations, parental accompaniment, use of the system, and instruction for children as to appropriate game-playing decisions.

In addition to added parental awareness, training the location staff to participate in the study resulted in an adept ability to implement the system, respond to consumer inquiries, and comply with the Code of Conduct. "This type of parent-staff interaction," the study reported, "is exactly the type of educational and informational exchange envisioned by the system's developers."

Implementation of the system, the Code of Conduct and the educational program by all sectors of the coin-op industry, according to the report, offers the most effective method of ensuring that children are exposed only to appropriate game choices. "The industry is committed to building upon the guidance derived from the Pilot Site Study Initiative," asserted the report, "in addition to engaging in outreach with allied organizations and facilities."

It is the finding of the report that complete adoption of and compliance with the system will be of value not only to the industry, but also to its customers. One of the most salient observations of the report was the "significant interest demonstrated by parents regarding the informational value of the System, further advancing the industry's view that parental empowerment is an essential cornerstone of the System." ▲

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PAS UPDATE

AAMA Game Ratings for PAS

(Tear out for a handy reference guide)

COMPANY/GAME	RATING
AM. LASER GAMES:	
Crime Patrol	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Drug Wars	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Fast Draw Showdown	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Gallagher's Shooting Gallery	Suitable for All Ages
Mad Dog II	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Mad Dog McCree	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Shootout at Old Tucson	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Space Pirates	Lifelike Violence-Strong
The Last Bounty Hunter	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Who Shot Johnny Rock?	Lifelike Violence-Strong
ATARI:	
Area 51	Animated Violence-Strong
California Speed	Suitable for all ages
COPS	Lifelike Violence-Mild
Duo Maximum Force/Area 51	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Final Lap	Suitable for All Ages
Hard Drivin'	Suitable for All Ages
Knuckle Bash	Animated Violence-Mild
Mace The Dark Age	Animated Violence-Strong
Maximum Force	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Moto Frenzy	Suitable for All Ages
Primal Rage	Animated Violence-Strong
Race Drivin'	Suitable for All Ages
Race Drivin' Panorama	Suitable for All Ages
Relief Pitcher	Suitable for All Ages
RoadBlasters	Suitable for All Ages
Road Riot	Suitable for All Ages
Rush The Rock	Suitable for All Ages
San Francisco Rush	Suitable for All Ages
Steel Talons	Suitable for All Ages
Surf Planet	Suitable for All Ages
T-Mek	Suitable for All Ages
Wayne Gretzky's 3D Hockey	Suitable for All Ages
World Rally	Suitable for All Ages
CAPCOM:	
Alien vs. Predator	Animated Violence-Mild
Cadillacs & Dinosaurs	Animated Violence-Mild
Captain Commando	Animated Violence-Mild
Clash of Super Heroes	Animated Violence-Mild
DarkStalkers	Animated Violence-Strong
D & D: Tower of Doom	Animated Violence-Mild
Eco Fighters	Suitable for All Ages
Final Fight	Animated Violence-Mild
Knights of the Round	Animated Violence-Mild
Marvel vs. Capcom	Animated Violence-Mild
Marvel Super Heroes	Animated Violence-Mild
Marvel Super Heroes vs. SF	Animated Violence-Mild
Punisher	Animated Violence-Mild
Street Fighter: The Movie	Animated Violence-Mild
SF II: Champ/Turbo	Animated Violence-Mild
SF III: 2nd Impact	Animated Violence-Strong
Super Gem Fighter	Animated Violence-Mild
Super Street Fighter II	Animated Violence-Mild
Three	Animated Violence-Strong
Tournament Slam Master	Animated Violence-Mild
Vampire Savior	Animated Violence-Mild
Warriors of Fate	Animated Violence-Mild
X-Men: Children of the Atom	Animated Violence-Mild
X-Men vs. Street Fighter	Animated Violence-Mild
CHUGAI BOYEKI/KANEKO:	
Blood Warriors	Animated Violence-Strong
Gal's Panic	Sexual Content-Mild
Gal's Panic 2	Sexual Content-Mild
Great 1000 Mile Rally	Suitable for all ages
Shogun Warrior	Animated Violence-Mild
DATA EAST:	
Capt. America/Avenger	Animated Violence-Mild
Dragon Gun	Animated Violence-Mild
Fighter's History	Animated Violence-Strong
Locked & Loaded	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Night Slasher	Animated Violence-Strong
Outlaw of Last Dynasty	Animated Violence-Strong
Stadium Hero	Suitable for All Ages
FABTEK:	
Battle Balls	Suitable for All Ages
Blood Bros.	Animated Violence-Mild
Cabal	Animated Violence-Mild
Dynamite Duke	Animated Violence-Mild
Heated Barrel	Animated Violence-Mild
Legionnaire	Animated Violence-Mild
Mcross	Suitable for All Ages
Raiden	Suitable for All Ages
Raiden II	Suitable for All Ages
Raiden DX	Suitable for All Ages
Raiden Fighters	Suitable for All Ages
Raiden Fighters II	Suitable for All Ages
Seibu Cup Soccer	Suitable for All Ages
Sports Match	Suitable for All Ages
Toki	Suitable for All Ages
Viper	Suitable for All Ages
Zero Team USA	Lifelike Violence-Mild
H. BETTI/I.G.S.:	
Alien Challenge	Suitable for All Ages
Lord of the Gun	Suitable for All Ages
HANAHO:	
Ghosthunter	Suitable for All Ages

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PAS UPDATE

COMPANY/GAME	RATING
Tickee Tickets	Suitable for All Ages
INCREDIBLE TECHNOLOGIES:	
Blood Storm	Animated Violence-Strong
Driver's Edge	Suitable for All Ages
Golden Tee 3D Golf	Suitable for All Ages
Rim Rockin' Basketball	Suitable for All Ages
Paris	Sexual Content-Mild
ShuffleShot	Suitable for All Ages
Time Killers	Lifelike Violence-Strong
World Class Bowling	Suitable for All Ages
JALECO:	
Battle K Road	Suitable for All Ages
Formula One Super Battle	Suitable for All Ages
Grand Prix II	Suitable for All Ages
Grand Prix Star	Suitable for All Ages
Gun Bird	Suitable for All Ages
Gun Force 2	Suitable for All Ages
Match 3	Suitable for All Ages
Peek-A-Boo	Sexual Content-Strong
Space Fighter	Suitable for All Ages
Super GT24	Suitable for All Ages
Wild Pilot	Suitable for All Ages
World PK Soccer V2	Suitable for All Ages
KONAMI:	
Battle Tryst	Animated Violence-Mild
Beat the Champ	Suitable for All Ages
Bucky O'Hare	Animated Violence-Mild
C.O.W. Boys of Moo Mesa	Animated Violence-Mild
Dark Horse Legend	Suitable for All Ages
Deadeye	Animated Violence-Mild
Fighting Bujutsu	Lifelike Violence-Mild
Fisherman's Bait	Suitable for All Ages
G.I. Joe	Animated Violence-Strong
GTI Club	Suitable for all ages
Hip Hop Mania	Suitable for all ages
Lethal Enforcers	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Metamorphic Force	Animated Violence-Strong
Mystic Warriors	Suitable for All Ages
Operation Thunder Hurricane	Animated Violence-Strong
Racin' Force	Suitable for All Ages
Racing Jam	Suitable for All Ages
Run & Gun	Suitable for All Ages
Rushing Heroes	Suitable for All Ages
Skier's High	Suitable for All Ages
Solar Assault	Suitable for All Ages
Teraburst	Animated Violence-Mild
Total Vice	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Turtles in Time	Animated Violence-Mild
Violent Storm	Animated Violence-Strong
Wave Shark	Suitable for All Ages
Winding Heat	Suitable for All Ages
X-Men	Animated Violence-Mild
MC O'RIVER:	
Aero Fighters	Suitable for all ages

COMPANY/GAME	RATING
Tao Taido	Suitable for All Ages
Tarzan Blazers	Suitable for All Ages
Turbo Force	Suitable for All Ages
MERIT:	
Mega Touch 5	Suitable for All Ages
Mega Touch XL	Sexual Content-Mild
(Does not have to be on software; operators can put at any level needed.)	
NAMCO:	
Ace Driver	Suitable for All Ages
Air Combat	Suitable for All Ages
Air Combat 22	Suitable for All Ages
Alpine Surfer	Suitable for All Ages
Alpine Racer II	Suitable for All Ages
Aqua Jet	Suitable for All Ages
Beastorizer	Animated Violence-Strong
Cyber Commands	Suitable for All Ages
Cybersled	Suitable for All Ages
Downhill Bikers	Suitable for All Ages
Final Furlong	Suitable for All Ages
Fighter & Attacker	Suitable for All Ages
Final Lap 2	Suitable for All Ages
Great Sluggers	Suitable for All Ages
Knuckle Head	Animated Violence-Mild
Libero Grande	Suitable for All Ages
Lucky & Wild	Animated Violence-Mild
Motocross Go!	Suitable for All Ages
Point Blank	Suitable for All Ages
Prop Cycle	Suitable for All Ages
Ridge Racer	Suitable for All Ages
Ridge Racer 2	Suitable for All Ages
Rapid River	Suitable for All Ages
Speed Up	Suitable for All Ages
Steel Gunner	Animated Violence-Strong
Steel Gunner 2	Animated Violence-Strong
Suzuka 8 Hours	Suitable for All Ages
Suzuka 8 Hours II	Suitable for All Ages
Tekken	Animated Violence-Strong
Tekken 2, 3	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Tokyo Wars	Animated Violence-Mild
Time Crisis 2	Animated Violence-Strong
SAMMY USA:	
Daioh	Suitable for All Ages
Eagle Shot Golf	Suitable for All Ages
Krazy Bowl	Suitable for All Ages
Pocket Gal	Suitable for All Ages
Survival Arts	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Thunder Dragon II	Suitable for All Ages
SEGA:	
Air Rescue	Animated Violence-Mild
Aliens 3	Animated Violence-Mild
Clutch Hitter	Suitable for All Ages
Daytona USA	Suitable for all ages
Daytona SPS	Suitable for all ages

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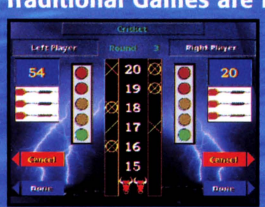

Cricket-pile on points before your opponent closes the number.

Tic-Tac-Darts-close the number before your opponent.

New Games for new fun:

Quick Draw-when the randomly selected number pops up, be the first one to score and steal your opponent's darts.

Quicket-Cricket with a twist. Hit the magic number first and steal your opponent's darts.

Easier League Play

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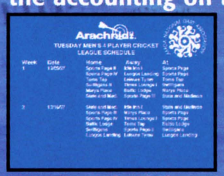
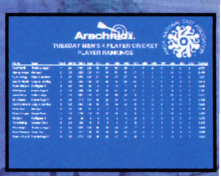


League Schedules

League Standings



Player Ranking

Enhanced Dual Communications

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PAS UPDATE

COMPANY/GAME	RATING
Desert Tank	Lifelike Violence-Mild
Die Hard	Lifelike Violence-Mild
Die Hard 2	Lifelike Violence-Mild
Galaxy Force	Animated Violence-Mild
Get Bass	Suitable for All Ages
Golden Axe II	Animated Violence-Mild
Gun Blade	Lifelike Violence-Mild
Harley-Davidson/Riders	Suitable for All Ages
House of the Dead	Animated Violence-Strong
Indy 500 #1, #2, #3	Suitable for All Ages
Jurassic Park	Animated Violence-Mild
Last Bronx	Lifelike Violence-Mild
Lost World	Animated Violence-Mild
Manx TT Twin	Suitable for All Ages
Motor Raid	Animated Violence-Mild
Print Club 2	Suitable for All Ages
OutRunners	Suitable for All Ages
Rally Championship	Suitable for All Ages
Sega Rally 2	Suitable for All Ages
Sega Super GT	Suitable for All Ages
Sega Water Ski	Suitable for All Ages
Spiderman	Animated Violence-Mild
Stadium Cross	Suitable for All Ages
Stamp Club	Suitable for All Ages
Star Wars	Animated Violence-Mild
Title Fight	Lifelike Violence-Mild
Top Skater	Suitable for All Ages
Touring Car	Suitable for All Ages
Turbo OutRun	Suitable for All Ages
Virtua Cop	Lifelike Violence-Mild
Virtua Fighter	Lifelike Violence-Mild
Virtua Fighter 2, 3	Lifelike Violence-Mild
Virtua Fighter Kids	Lifelike Violence-Mild
Virtua Striker	Suitable for All Ages
Virtual On	Animated Violence-Mild
Wave Runner	Suitable for All Ages
Wing War	Suitable for All Ages
SNK:	
Aero Fighters	Suitable for All Ages
Aggressors-Dark Kombat	Suitable for All Ages
Art of Fighting	Animated Violence-Strong
Bust A Move	Suitable for all ages
Double Dragon	Animated Violence-Strong
Fatal Fury	Animated Violence-Strong
Fatal Fury Special	Animated Violence-Strong
Fighters History Dyn.	Animated Violence-Strong
Galaxy Fights	Animated Violence-Strong
Irritating Maze	Animated Violence-Mild
King of Fighters	Animated Violence-Strong
King of Fighters '96	Animated Violence-Strong
Kizuna Encounter	Animated Violence-Strong
Neo Messenger	Suitable for All Ages
Neo Print	Suitable for All Ages
Real Bout/Fatal Fury 2	Animated Violence-Strong
Road's Edge	Suitable for All Ages
Samurai Shodown	Animated Violence-Strong

COMPANY/GAME	RATING
Samurai Shodown 64	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Stakes Winner 2	Suitable for All Ages
Street Slam	Suitable for All Ages
Super Sidekicks 2 & 3	Suitable for All Ages
Top Bomber	Suitable for All Ages
Top Hunter	Suitable for All Ages
Ultimate II	Suitable for All Ages
Windjammers	Suitable for All Ages
World Heroes	Animated Violence-Strong
TAITO:	
Bubble Symphony	Suitable for All Ages
Darius III	Suitable for All Ages
Double Axle	Suitable for All Ages
Elevator Action Returns	Animated Violence-Strong
Global Champion	Animated Violence-Strong
Hat Trick Hero '94, '95	Suitable for All Ages
Operation Thunderbolt	Animated Violence-Strong
Operation Wolf 3	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Ring Rage	Lifelike Violence-Mild
SCI	Suitable for All Ages
Space Gun	Animated Violence-Strong
Space Invaders '95	Suitable for All Ages
Silent Dragon	Animated Violence-Mild
Super Chase	Suitable for all ages
Under Fire	Lifelike Violence-Strong
TECMO:	
Cup '94	Suitable for All Ages
V Goal	Suitable for All Ages
U.S. GAMES:	
(Leisure Time Technology)	
Countertop Champion 1, 2	Suitable for all ages
VIVID GROUP:	
Big Head Racer	Suitable for All Ages
GranBall	Suitable for All Ages
Orbosixx	Suitable for All Ages
Pong	Suitable for All Ages
Turbo Kourier II	Suitable for All Ages
WILLIAMS BALLY/MIDWAY:	
NFL Blitz	Suitable for All Ages
Cruis'n USA	Suitable for All Ages
Cruis'n World	Suitable for All Ages
Killer Instinct	Animated Violence-Strong
MK4	Animated Violence-Strong
Mortal Kombat	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Mortal Kombat II, III	Life like Violence-Strong
Ms. Pac-Man	Suitable for All Ages
NBA Hangtime	Suitable for All Ages
NBA JAM Tourn. Edition	Suitable for All Ages
Off Road	Suitable for All Ages
Rampage	Animated Violence-Mild
Revolution X	Lifelike Violence-Strong
Super High Impact	Suitable for All Ages
Terminator 2	Lifelike Violence-Strong
War Gods	Lifelike Violence-Strong

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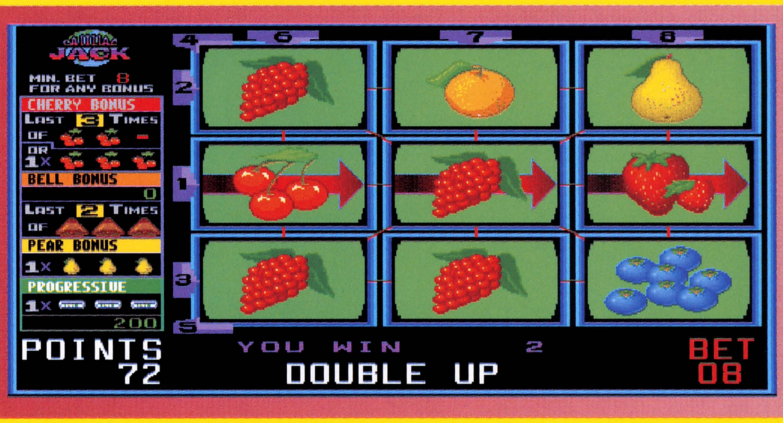

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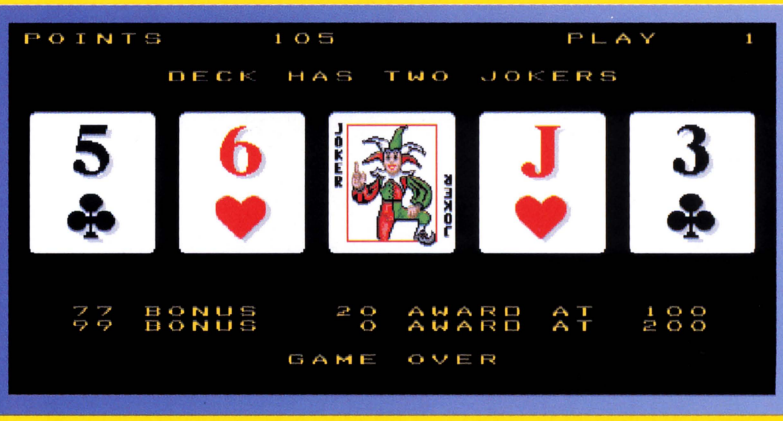

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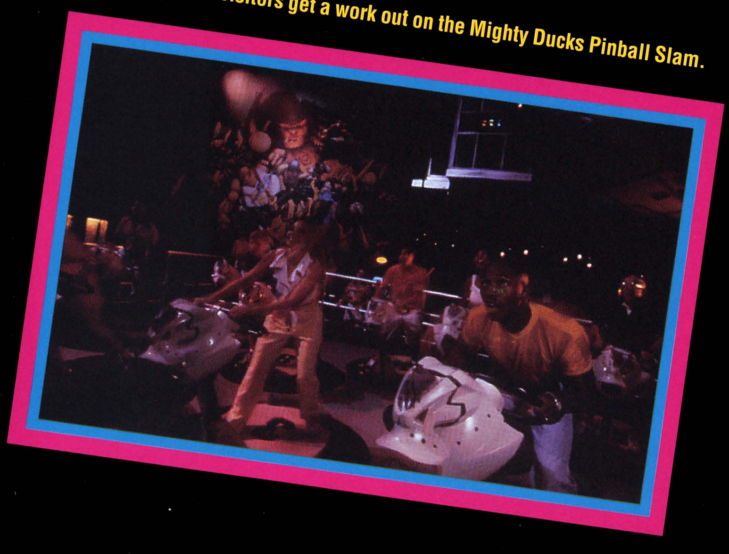
Disney Quest
AT YOUR BEHEST

JIM MCCORMICK

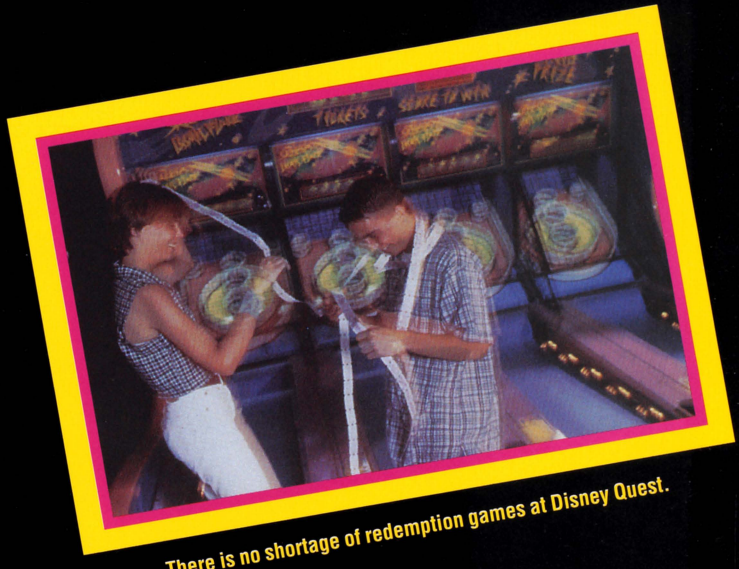
Not content to rest on its well-deserved laurels, Disney has created yet another innovative entertainment experience in a Downtown of its own imagination

If, while you are in Orlando for Fun Expo, you are looking for something different from the tried and true Disney experience of say the Magic Kingdom or Epcot Center, Disney Quest offers an interactive experience which should be of particular interest to Expo attendees. Our old friend Jack Boasberg, owner of distributor/operator New Orleans Novelty Company Inc., recently returned from a visit to Disney Quest with his family. Jack was kind enough to share his thoughts on many aspects of the interactive facility.

Billed as "The Ultimate Interactive Adventure!" Disney Quest has opened its doors to visitors to Orlando, Fla. Now that the 100,000-square-foot five-story flagship facility, located at Downtown Disney West Side at Walt Disney World Resort, is a reality, Disney is planning to open a Chicago site in summer 1999 and future sites in 20-30 other major domestic and international destination markets.



Disney Quest visitors get a work out on the Mighty Ducks Pinball Slam.



There is no shortage of redemption games at Disney Quest.

"I thought the marketing was creative and well researched, and the architecture was very intriguing," Boasberg said. "It was both a mystery and an adventure to find our way through the complex, much like a fun house. There were a lot of one-of-a-kind experiences."

Open 10:30 a.m. until midnight daily, Disney Quest utilizes a stored value card, which is charged upon entering and is rechargeable inside. The "Disney Quest Card" can be initially purchased at one of several entry options ranging from $7-$20 and may be used to play all sorts of innovative video games, simulators, and redemption pieces. You get 20 points for $7, 60 points for $15, and 90 points for $20, all of which averages to 44 cents per game. Games range in "point cost" from two to 10 points each.

"The first time we went to Disney Quest we spent $15 each," Boasberg said, "but I'd say that the way to get the most value for your dollar is to go ahead and get the $20 card--if you have the funds—for a better deal."

"Within a two- or three-hour visit, guests can embark on adventures that let them actually 'enter the story' and become part of it," Art Levitt, president of Disney Regional Entertainment, explained. "Disney Quest showcases many of our beloved characters and places and presents them in a bold new way using advanced technology to turn fantasy into reality."

The Disney Quest experience begins by riding a seemingly-out-of-control "Cybrolator" guided by Aladdin's madcap Genie of the Lamp. The doors open, and the visitor is standing at the Ventureport, an awe-inspiring crossroads of adventure leading to four distinct worlds of entertainment: Explore Zone, Score Zone, Create Zone, and Replay Zone.

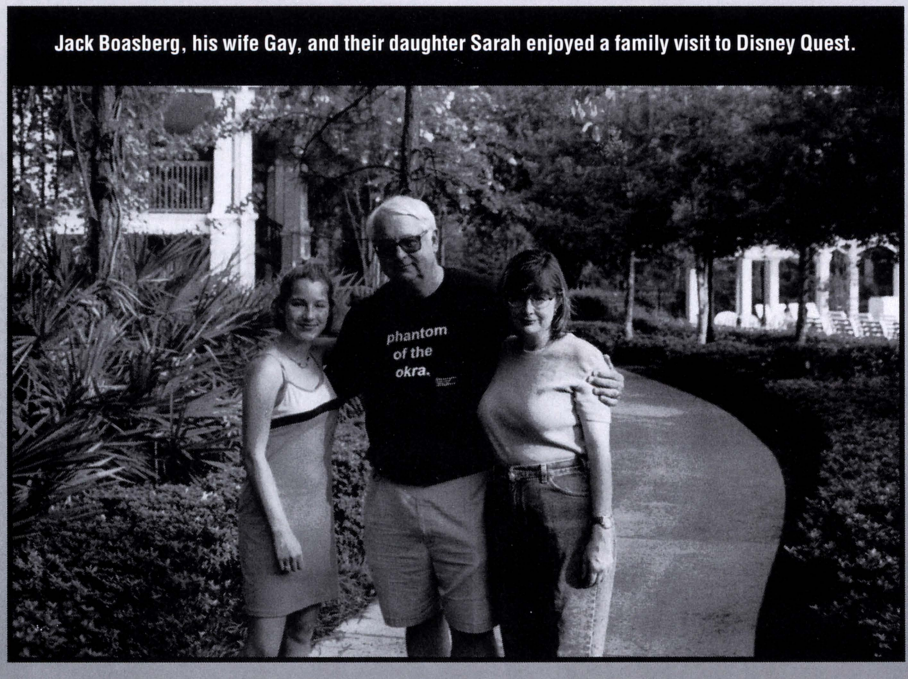
The gateway to the Explore Zone is the tiger's head from Aladdin's Cave of Wonders, which leads to a 150-foot slide that drops three stories. A "dimensional rift" slashed through a comic book by Maleficent from Sleeping Beauty grants passage into the Score Zone. A digital artist's palette is the entrance to the Create Zone, and an energetic collage of classic '50s moon-crazy symbols leads to the retro future of the Replay Zone.

Once inside Explore Zone, visitors can navigate a primeval world in the Virtual Jungle Cruise, where dangers include hungry dinosaurs and a cataclysmic comet. Visitors can also drive a camera equipped radio controlled car on a hunt for treasure of the Incas beneath the glass floor of Explore Zone or fly through the streets of Agrabah on a hunt to release the Genie in Aladdin's Magic Carpet Ride. "My family very much enjoyed the Aladdin's Magic Carpet Ride, for which we wore the virtual reality goggles," Boasberg said.

The Score Zone offers a competition city, where visitors can go sword-to-sword with super villains as they fly through the 3D comic book world in Ride the Comix!; rescue Earth colonists under attack while piloting a planetary walker in Invasion! An Alien Encounter (Boasberg's favorite interactive game at Disney Quest); or jump onto a life-size joystick motion base and hip-check your friends in Mighty Ducks Pinball Slam.

"The Mighty Ducks Pinball game was really like going to the gym," Boasberg told us. "It was a real physical workout, and the fact that you compete against other players was very exciting."

Create Zone is an "imagineering" studio where visitors can design the roller coaster of their choice then ride that roller coaster on the 360-degree pitch-and-roll simulator known as Cyber Space Mountain, which Boasberg told us was the most popular attraction to visitors. There is also an Animation Academy, where visitors can learn about Disney animation; the Sid's Create a Toy, where visitors can make their own toy from a vast menu of parts and take it home; and the Living Easel, which is used to create a



Jack Boasberg, his wife Gay, and their daughter Sarah enjoyed a family visit to Disney Quest.

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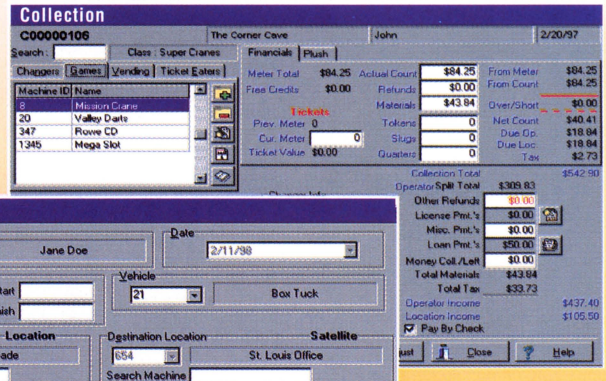

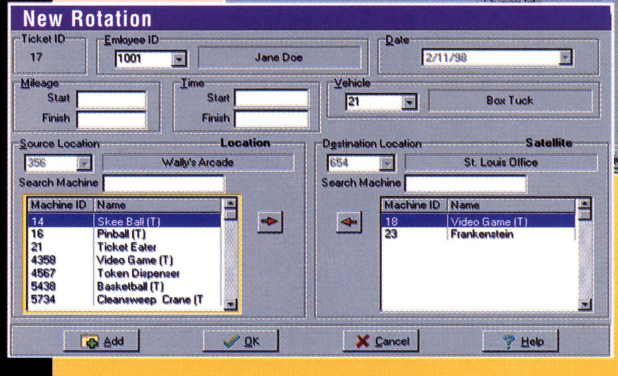

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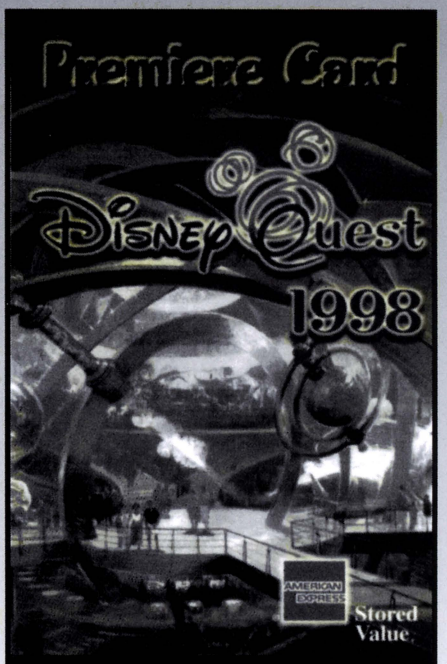
painting of color and movement. "The Living Easels, where you could create your own artwork and then have it mounted, was one of the most enjoyable activities," Boasberg said.

The Replay Zone's three levels of classic rides and games with a futuristic twist include a bubble-top bumper car ride called Buzz Lightyear's Astro Blaster in which visitors choose their role as driver or gunner and shoot it out with playground-sized balls. Visitors can also discover a trove of custom redemption games, from Dumbo's Water Race to Mickey's Lunar Rally.



Disney Quest utilizes a stored value card.

On the whole, Boasberg said he and his family were impressed with Disney Quest and would recommend it to anyone visiting the area. "The color schemes, the signage, all of it was done first class," Boasberg said. "The place is full of strictly interactive games, some of which are educational, and there is a good collection of old and new video. *Time Crisis* got the most play while we were there."

The two food areas inside Disney Quest include Food Quest, which offers a quick fix of fresh salads, sandwiches, and pizza, or the Wonderland Cafe, which features desserts and drinks. Boasberg said he saw very few people eating inside the Disney Quest facility or surfing the World Wide Web in the Internet area.

Disney Quest operates under the auspices of Disney Regional Entertainment, a new division of The Walt Disney Co., which was established in 1996 to create breakthrough entertainment concepts for metropolitan and suburban markets. For information about Disney Quest, call (407) 828-4600. ▲

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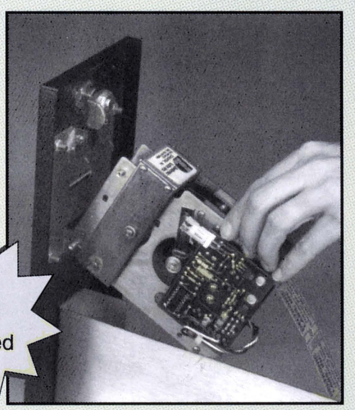

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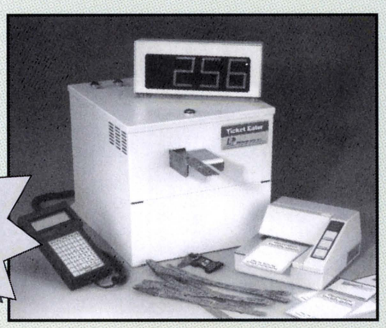

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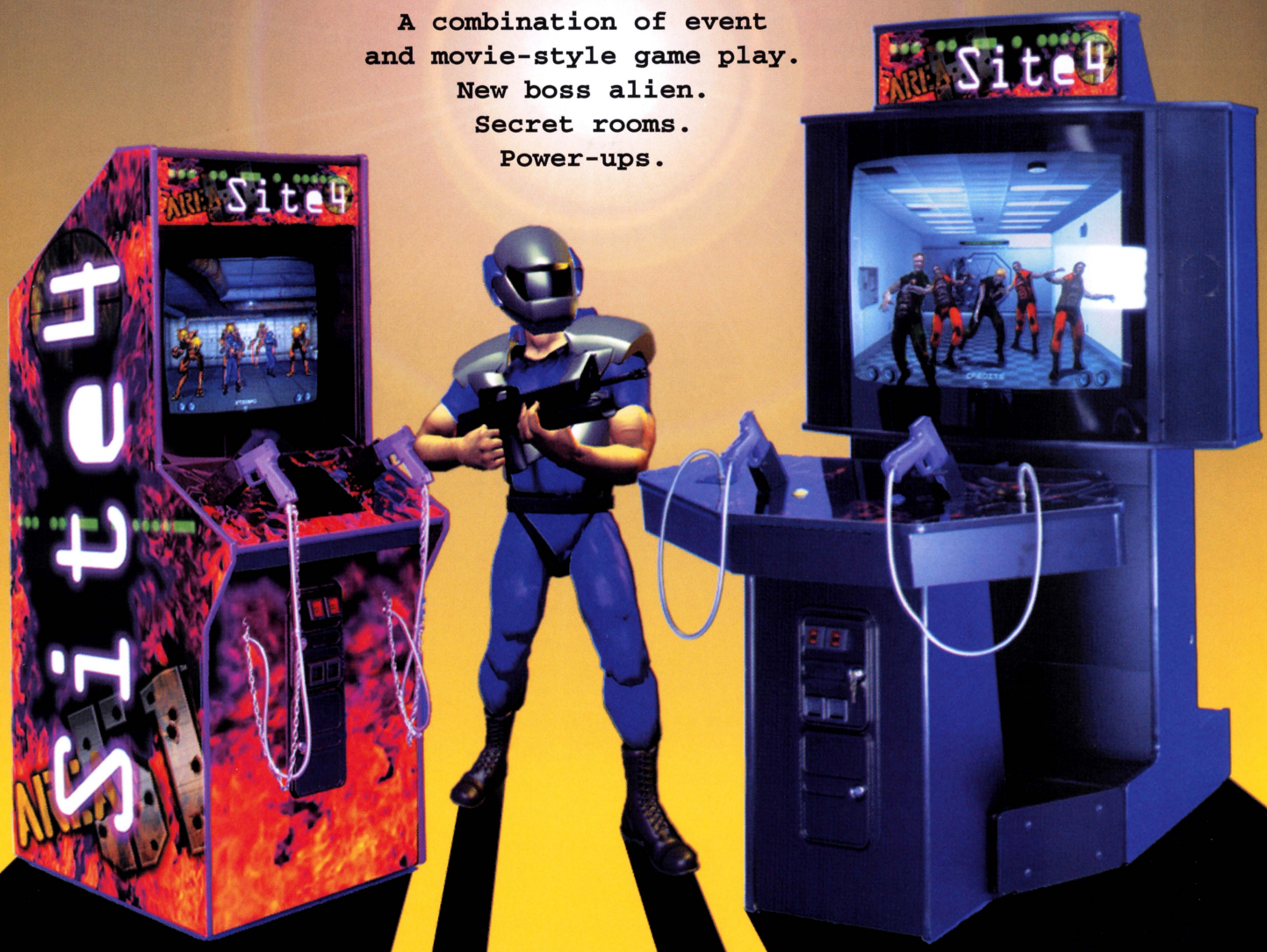

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ATARI GAMES

Alternative guide to ORLANDO

For this month's 8th Fun Expo in Orlando, Fla., Oct. 14-17, *Play Meter* decided to shake the bushes around Orlando to find out what visitors could do with free time besides entering the behemoth theme park.

King Kong says hello to visitors of Universal Studios Florida.

Technology goes terribly wrong in Disney World's Alien Encounter.

Our sources led us to many different restaurants and nightclubs, ranging in price from $10-$30, in the area of the Orange County Convention Center. One of the most popular nightspots is the Sapphire Supper Club at 54 N. Orange Ave. Dinner is served at the Sapphire nightly from Wednesday through Saturday, and live performances by salsa, rock, jazz, and almost every other genre are on hand almost every night of the week.

If you're in the mood for a lighthearted, fun dining experience, try the **Beeline Diner,** a high-gloss '5os diner in the Peabody Orlando Hotel at 9801 International Dr. Though often busy, the diner is a good place to get breakfast or a late-night snack, plus there's a great old jukebox. 407/352-4000.

Harvey's Bistro at 390 N. Orlando Ave. is in the Barnett Bank building downtown, within walking distance of the arena and the Centroplex. It's a new place and attracts a business crowd at lunch as well as a late night crowd. We recommend the thin-crusted pizza with caramelized onions. 407/246-6560.

The golfer in you will want to stop into **Sam Snead's Tavern** at 2461 S. Hiawassee Road. This golf-theme grill features memorabilia from the legendary golfer's life and career. Here we were told to try the highly esteemed Caesar salad and the barbecued spareribs. This is one of the few restaurants in town open as late as 1 a.m. 407/295-9999.

If Asian is your taste, try **4-5-6** at 657 N. Primrose Dr. A sleek and spotless restaurant that boasts the absence of MSG and all preservatives in its dishes, 4-5-6 serves traditional Asian recipes. Try the chicken-three-ways (one platter that includes portions of General Tso's chicken, lemon chicken, and sliced chicken breast with snow peas). 407/898-1899.

For a night of Italian dining get over to **Cariera's** at 7600 Dr. Phillips Blvd. in the Marketplace. It has an atmosphere that's casual and a location that's convenient for tourists, but most of all it has fresh ingredients and pizza ovens imported from Italy. You can almost taste Napoli! 407/351-1187.

Finally in the restaurant department, even if you don't go, you need to know one good steak house in every town. Our pick for Orlando is **Linda's La Cantina** at 4721 E. Colonial Dr. There aren't many items on the menu, but we're told you can't go wrong, especially if you order the T-bone. All entrees come with a side of spaghetti or a potato. 407/894-4491.

A Sea World trainer high-fives Shamu.

Helpful Web sites

Visit Orlando: www.orlando.com
Fodor's Guide: www.fodors.com
Disney World: www.disney.com
Universal Studios Florida: www.usf.com

Once in Orlando

After arrival you may want to know how to get around if you intend to venture beyond the convention center. Public buses operate between the airport and the main terminal of the Tri-County Transit Authority. Although the cost is only 75¢, other options are preferable for travel to Disney World because center-city Orlando is far from most of the hotels used by theme-park vacationers.

Taxis take only a half-hour to get from the airport to most hotels, and they charge about $25 plus tip. If you wish to be transported by a limousine, Mears Transportation Group (407/422-5566) will meet you at the gate, help you with your luggage, and whisk you away, in either an 11-passenger van, a town car, or a limo. And if you intend to drive while in Orlando, use the Beeline Expressway (Rte. 528) to get to the hotels from the airport. Follow the expressway west to International Drive, or stay on the Beeline to I-4 and head either west to Walt Disney World or east to downtown Orlando. Call your hotel for the best route.

Baby-sitting is widely available; ask at your hotel desk. These programs charge between $5 and $10 an hour, depending on the ages and number of children and the type of service provided.

Central Florida attractions are among the most accessible destinations in the world for people who have disabilities. The Disabled Traveler's Helpline of Central Florida (800/945-2045, fax 407/856-5949) can answer questions about the accessibility of many area attractions, hotels, and restaurants.

Of course, dial 911 for police or ambulance. Hospital emergency rooms are open 24 hours a day. The most accessible hospital to those in Walt Disney World is the Orlando Regional Medical Center/Sand Lake Hospital, in the International Drive area (9400 Turkey Lake Road, 407/351-8500).

For minor medical problems, contact Central Care (601 E. Rollins St., 407/660-8118; open daily 8 a.m.-midnight). Emergency dental referral can be reached at 407/847-7474.

Late night pharmacies include Eckerd Drugs (908 Lee Road, 407/644-6908), just off I-4 at the Lee Road exit, and Walgreen's (6201 International Dr., 407/345-8311 or 407/345-8402), opposite Wet 'n' Wild. Both are open 24 hours.

About every hotel is linked by shuttle to area attrac-

tions. The most important artery in the Orlando area is I-4, linking the Atlantic Coast to Florida's Gulf of Mexico. However, the interstate runs north and south in the Orlando area. So think north when I-4 signs say east, and think south when the signs say west.

The major car-rental companies in Orlando are Alamo, Avis, Budget, Dollar, Hertz, and National InterRent. Fortunately, Orlando offers some of the lowest rental-car rates in the United States. Rates begin at $28 a day and $136 a week for an economy car with unlimited mileage. This does not include tax on car rentals.

If you are staying in Orlando proper, you can ride public buses to get around. To find out which bus to take, ask your hotel clerk or call the Tri-County Transit Authority Information Office (407/841-8240) for more information.

Scheduled service and charters linking just about every hotel and major attraction in the area are available from Gray Line of Orlando (407/422-0744), Mears Transportation Group (407/422-5566), Phoenix Tours (407/859-4211), and Rabbit Bus Lines (407/291-2424). In addition, many hotels run their own shuttles especially for guests.

Taxi fares start at $2.45 and cost $1.40 for each mile thereafter. Sample fares: To WDW's Magic Kingdom, about $20 from International Drive, $11-$15 from U.S. 192. To Church Street Station, downtown, $20-$25 from International Drive, $30-$40 from U.S. 192.

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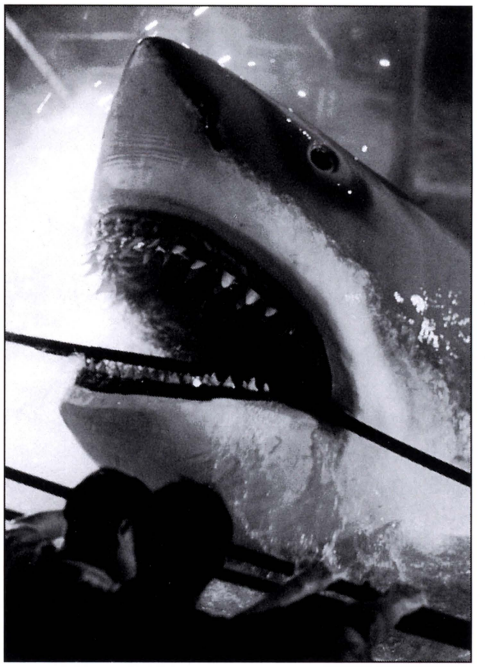

Just when you thought it was safe to go back into the water...Come face-to-face with a 3 ton Great White shark at "JAWS", Universal Studios Florida's thrilling ride adventure.

Area theme parks

Visiting Walt Disney World is not cheap, especially if you have a child or two along. Everyone 10 and older pays adult price; reductions are available for children 3-9. No discounted family tickets are available.

Operating hours for the Magic Kingdom, Epcot Center, and Disney-MGM Studios theme parks vary widely throughout the year and change, so call ahead.

Disney changes its prices at least once a year and without much notice. As of this writing, Walt Disney World admission prices were as follows (adult prices first, then children's in parentheses): One-day ticket: $42 ($34). Four-Day Value Pass: $149 ($119). Five-Day Park Hopper: $189 ($151). To all prices add six percent tax.

Universal Studios Florida continues to offer rides, shows, and interactive entertainment to visitors to the working motion picture and television studio and theme park. Interactive rides, like the new "Twister...Ride it Out!" or the older, more famous "Kongfrontation" and "Jaws", remain the primary attractions for young and old alike. 407/363-8000.

Also, Sea World of Florida continues to showcase extraordinary performances featuring live whales, walruses, polar bears, dolphins, penguins, sharks, and harbor seals. 407/351-3600.

Pack comfortable walking shoes. The entire area of Orlando is casual, day and night, so men will need a jacket and tie in only a few restaurants. For sightseeing and theme-park visits, pack shorts, sundresses, cotton slacks or jeans, T-shirts, and a light sweater as protection against the sometimes-glacial air-conditioning. Don't forget your sunglasses. Because it's October, and usually 67-83°F, be prepared for a range of temperatures.

For Orlando visitor information contact the Orlando/Orange County Convention and Visitors Bureau (8445 International Dr., Orlando, FL 32819, 407/363-5871). Ask for the free Discover Orlando guidebook; it includes the Orlando Magicard, good for many sorts of discounts on area attractions. ▲

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.80¢ (5-10")	57.60	115.20
.85¢ (5-11")	61.20	122.40
.90¢ (5"-12")	64.80	129.60
$1.00 (6"-12")	72.00	144.00

Averages	72 Pieces	144 Pieces
$1.15 (6-13")	82.80	165.60
1.25 (7-14")	90.00	180.00
1.50 (7"-14")	108.00	216.00
1.75 (8"-14")	126.00	252.00

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A.M. & D.	426	(707)459-9451
A.M. Kart	412	(407)888-3338
AAMA	536	(847)290-9088
AAMA	556	(847)290-9088
ABC/Kidzkart	212	(800)578-2243
Actimax	1246	(800)563-3426
Action Lighting	111	(406)586-5105
Actual Reality Intl.	237	(403)440-3706
Adventure Golf Services	437	(616)922-8166
Air Dimension Design	257	(800)680-8823
Air Plus Mfg.	372	(619)596-4808
Alexander Entertainment	465	(813)314-0026
Alexanders Costumes	1251	(800)899-2539
Alinco Costumes	969	(801)266-6337
Allied Specialty Insurance	1218	(800)237-3355
Amer-A-Can Consultants	310	(800)766-0093
Ameribev	553	(561)753-6160
American Lighting	260	(303)363-6945
American Locker Security	646	(800)828-9118
American Miniature Golf & Go	1141	(800)774-3101
Ameriventure	673	(208)745-0204
Amusement Business	631	(615)321-4250
Amusement Electronics Co.	957	(714)538-7118
Amusement Leisure Worldwide	450	(403)244-2202
Amusement Products of Am.	1254	(407)673-3033
Amusement Products LLC	736	(800)438-3558
Amusement Solutions	869	(770)449-4033
Amusement Today	1316	(817)460-7220
Amusements Unlimited	1077	(712)275-4226
Anchor Industries	565	(800)322-8368
Anico Intl.	218	(212)779-3183
Ascension Productions	1078	(403)496-9058
Ascent Products	842	(406)582-5842
Astro Dist.	541	(309)786-7066
Astro Putt	312	(800)542-4189
Atec	1042	(800)775-6387
ATM Debit Source	849	(718)531-7194
Automatic Bar Controls	670	(707)448-5151
Ball Pit Services	1312	(973)256-5550
Balloon on Wheels	1366	(228)385-9800
Beckman Insurance	1050	(800)345-2881
Best Equipment	1121	(800)949-2378
Birmingham Vending	1236	(205)324-7526
Bob's Space Racers	948	(904)677-0761
Bonita Marie Intl.	960	(732)341-4056
Brass Eagle	547	(501)621-4390
Brewer's Ledge	1208	(617)983-5244
Brunswick Indoor Recreation	936	(616)725-4652
Bullock, Smith & Partners	319	(423)546-5772
Bullwindle's Intl.	964	(714)768-8111
Bumper Buggy	1237	(501)362-2354
C & F Trading Co.	564	(800)632-0702
CamEra	958	(813)570-3900
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Chance Rides	741	(316)942-7411
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Chicago Style Pizza	857	(941)665-1472
Children's Entertainment Assn.	1249	(212)707-2821
CIC Applicant Checks	225	(813)535-4473
Classic Foods	223	(817)332-1071
Cleveland Coin Machine	1252	(800)776-6699
Coin Carnival	1125	(801)444-1445
Cost of Wisconsin	851	(414)255-4220
Creegan Co.	968	(740)283-3708
Crest Electronics	1306	(336)855-6422
Cutting Edge Creations	1602	(612)882-8651
Dan Brechner & Co. LLC	518	(516)767-6767
Deadsolid Simulations	818	(717)655-6500
Deltronic Labs	1137	(215)997-8616
Dillon Importing Co.	868	(405)948-1234
Doron Precision Systems	1100	(607)772-0478
Durran Patterned Carpet	1259	(800)241-4580
Duro Sales and Games	248	(800)811-9401
Eastern Golf Corp.	1065	(717)689-0560
Elton Amusement Products	908	44/1704537853
Emedia	274	(773)267-8500
Entertainment & Leisure USA	1170	(407)654-7810
Entropy USA	744	(732)506-0002
Enviroworks	1040	(407)889-5533
Euroslot	117	44/41616243687
Events Business News	273	(800)282-9909
Everett James	1068	(801)974-5346
Expo Games	663	(606)253-3976
Fabricon Carousel Co.	343	(718)342-2440
Fairway	674	(616)651-9484
Fawn Vendors	1337	(515)274-3641
FEC Management Magazine	672	(203)794-0444
Feris Productions	1000	(602)470-1177
Fesco	662	(770)922-4559
Five Star Redemption	446	(626)852-0508
Flaghouse Inc.	873	(201)329-7588
Flags Unlimited	551	(813)684-1782

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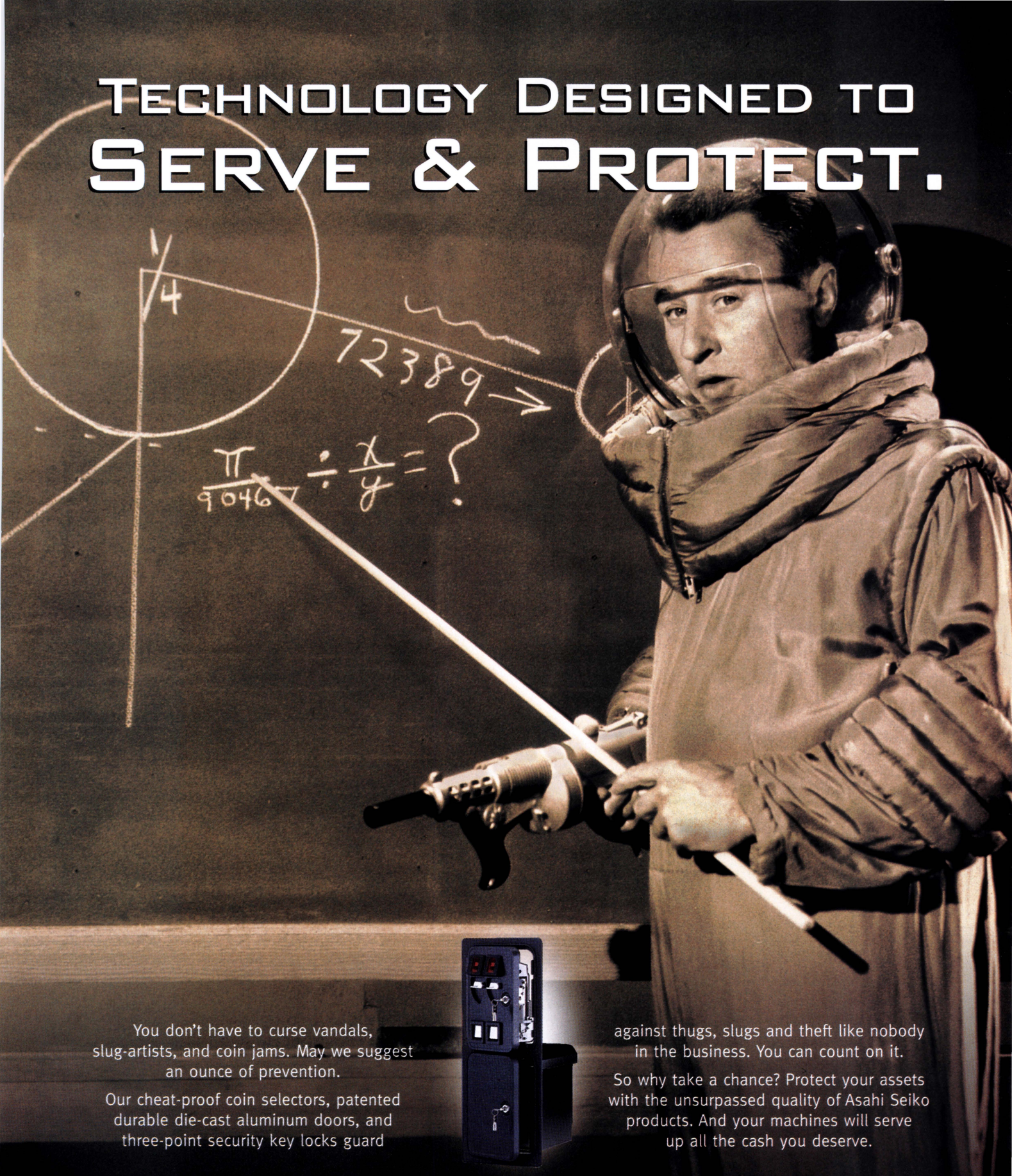

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Exhibitor List

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Flagship Carpets	368	(706)695-4055
Flavor Wear/Anthony Ent.	1304	(760)749-1332
Florida Robotics	838	(407)568-6146
Foam Tech./Symmetry Tech.	1128	(401)723-3626
Formula K Raceways	700	(616)668-4574
Foster Mfg. Corp.	724	(414)633-7073
Full Swing Golf	1118	(619)675-1100
Fun Center Software	537	(914)896-5020
Fun Industries	242	(309)755-5021
Fun Station Associates	1132	(203)778-4386
Fun Tec/Topec	1140	(800)845-2830
Funhouse Enterprises	157	(208)525-8270
G.W. & Associates	1119	(405)302-0330
Games To Go	1331	(701)271-0378
Gametime Plush	1243	(619)874-3944
Gemini Sound Products	101	(732)802-6004
GGB Tech	240	(612)884-2355
Giftco	756	(800)443-8261
Gilderfluke & Co.	1165	(818)840-9484
Globl VR	1106	(408)998-5812
Globe Ticket & Label Co.	1052	(404)762-9711
Gold Medal Products	952	(513)769-7676
Golftek Inc.	500	(208)743-9037
H. Betti Industries	342	(800)524-2343
Haas & Wilkersen Insurance	732	(800)821-7703
Hamilton Mfg. Co.	330	(419)867-4858
Hang Time	129	(561)881-7777
Happ Controls	1046	(888)289-4277
Harris Miniature Golf	718	(609)522-4200
Hawaiian Tropical Snow	557	(561)630-9100
Heads Up Technologies	628	(972)407-1131
HEC Services	781	(407)438-4040
HMS Monaco	461	(800)777-0901
Hoffman Mint	1144	(800)227-5813
HOK Studio E	576	(407)649-8825
Hollrock Engineering	568	(413)586-4653
Huffer Air Systems	1283	(770)451-7771
Ideal Software Systems	1136	(800)964-3325
Inflatable 2000	1281	(626)969-7780
Inflatable Attractions	1412	(407)673-7185
Inflatable Technologies	1400	(812)256-9171
Inflate Inc.	980	(818)786-7573
ICE	112	(716)759-0370
Instant Buttons Machine	1359	(203)287-9460
Intercard	1112	(800)732-3770
IAAPA	363	(703)836-4800
Intl. Laser Tag Assn.	159	(317)375-9631
IRGA & MGAUS	373	(210)824-1923
Island Design	1069	(707)547-4850
J & J Amusements	200	(800)854-3140
J & J Snack Foods Corp.	1020	(800)486-9533
J. Farrell Turf & Carpets	669	(800)726-0559
JC Pacific Trading Co.	963	(212)764-1977
Joissu Products	369	(407)648-8746
Jolly Jumps	150	(805)484-0026
Jolly Roger Ltd.	1258	(150)732-8856
K & K Insurance Group	962	(800)648-6406
Kart Marketing Intl.	972	(630)620-6347
Kiddie Rides USA	845	(800)448-6888
Kiddies Mfg.	272	(787)897-3180
Klopp Coin Counters	119	(800)356-9080
Knight Mediacom Intl.	1242	(914)365-1270
Korte Paper Co.	475	(219)424-4514
Kreative Karts	922	(519)773-8020
Laser Chaser LLC	706	(800)527-5985
Laser Star Technology	836	(800)527-3797
LaserForce	1159	(801)374-3400
Lasertron Inc.	508	(800)488-8766
Lazer-Tron Corp.	748	(510)460-0873
Leisure Activities Unlimited	1182	(905)727-6945
Leisure Products	156	(609)727-1040
Leisure Time Development	1247	(602)926-3973
Lil' Orbits	1070	(612)559-7505
Little Tikes/Omni	848	(800)543-6664
M & N Intl.	1143	(612)426-1667
Machine-O-Matic	918	(905)836-4700
Magic Ice Products	768	(209)464-8832
Mask U.S.	300	(619)476-9041
Mason Corp.	825	(800)821-4141
Master Pitching Machine	224	(800)878-8228
MaxFlight Corp.	800	(732)942-9898
Maybridge-EMR	1310	(145)250-6033
Medical Technology	1169	(800)361-1259
Merit Industries	122	(800)523-2760
Miniature Golf Dev. of Am.	1171	(904)781-4653
Moon-Walk Enterprises	1146	(800)835-0016
Muncie Novelty Co.	660	(800)428-8640
NANCO/Nancy Sales	749	(617)884-1700
National Ticket Co.	737	(800)829-0829
Naughton Insurance	341	(401)433-4000
NBGS Intl.	856	(830)620-4000
Nestle Ice Cream Co.	269	(440)349-5757
New-Mark Enterprises	1048	(801)484-2227
Noel Industries	519	(813)785-7630
Northwestern Corp.	456	(815)942-1300
O.K. Mfg.	563	(800)748-5480
Oriental Trading Co.	618	(800)228-8884
OY C.E. Lindgren AB	1328	358/195360119
P & H Co.	656	(954)946-0420
Pageantry World	530	(714)373-1996
Par T Golf Marketing	306	(702)243-6811
Pentes Play	1229	(704)552-2428

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Pepsi-Cola Co.	912	(860)355-3388
Perky's Foodservice	236	(813)626-6675
Peter F. Olesen & Assoc.	117	(847)253-1515
Pezzetta Miniature Golf	764	(609)645-2456
Pixel Magic	1245	(800)467-4935
Pizzas of Eight	771	(800)422-2901
Planet X	1228	(203)248-3303
Play By Play/Ace Acme	942	(800)426-9897
Play Meter Magazine	**1018**	**(504)488-7003**
Play Space Services	762	(407)957-9499
Playsmart	861	(660)829-0523
Plush Appeal	469	(504)482-6100
Precision Dynamics Corp.	661	(785)266-9443
Price Chopper	364	(407)679-1600
Prime Play Systems	826	(604)944-7529
Prizetrak	1322	(805)965-7726
QNC/Quik N' Crispy	427	(800)233-0716
Quality Prod./Happy Times	256	(630)543-5430
Quicksilver Development	268	(702)888-8100
R. Humes Enterprises	411	(610)258-0387
R.M.K. Sales	1233	(516)887-0600
Radar Sales	436	(612)533-1100
Rake Vending Service	1163	(800)437-1118
Raymond Geddes & Co.	107	(410)426-6389
Rebecca's	1230	(800)777-2235
Rebound Action Sports	100	(435)563-0163
Recreation Industry Mgt.	441	(704)532-2382
Red Bone Products	1024	(314)257-2322
Redemption Plus	665	(913)492-5070
Replay Magazine	160	(818)347-3820
R.G. Mitchell Ltd.	457	(175)476-7373
Rhode Island Novelty	337	(401)274-1818
Rick Smith & Co.	1253	(217)628-1133
Ride Development Co.	118	(503)371-9490
Rides 4 U	561	(908)526-8009
Robot Country USA	1154	(561)732-0817
Roger Williams Mint	1326	(508)226-3310
Ronbotics	1200	(703)406-6123
S & S Sports Power	524	(435)752-1987
Safari Thatch & Bamboo	121	(954)564-0059
Sabdart Oridycts	1344	(216)692-1229
Sandblast	775	(205)263-2631
SCS Interactive	348	(408)378-7611
Seidel Amusement Machine	712	(505)821-6878
Sellner Mfg.	928	(800)533-0390
SGD Co.	222	(800)321-3411
Sherman Specialty	443	(800)645-6513
Shopping Center Business	1274	(770)952-4300
Shopping Center World	961	(770)955-2500
Signs & Scenes by Frank	1152	(813)654-0538
Signs & Shapes Intl.	1320	(402)331-3181
Skee-Ball Inc.	1147	(215)997-8900
Skelton Consulting Dev.	772	(800)550-1758
Sky Inc.	559	(514)449-0142
Slush Puppie Corp.	1150	(800)543-0860
Smart Golf	128	(619)748-5911
Smart Industries Corp.	431	(515)265-9900
Snazaroo	1063	(972)219-8702
SNK Corp.	608	(408)292-4550
Soccer Kicking Cages	1244	(508)394-2723
Soft Play LLC	761	(800)782-7529
Southeast Surfacing	1248	(407)475-9161
Spaceball	600	(319)390-6979
Sportexe	831	(800)892-6011
Stagecraft Inc.	1059	(513)541-7150
Standard Change-Makers	863	(317)899-6966
Star Track	440	(516)293-5150
Sterling & Sterling	640	(516)773-8602
Stricor Inc.	900	(770)923-3689
Sureshot Redemption	648	(408)937-8738
Syrup Systems	326	(318)232-3037
Taiwan Slot Magazine	675	88627607407
Taste Maker Foods	1073	(800)467-1407
Taylor & Associates	976	(800)237-7798
The Robot Factory	865	(719)447-0331
Tonsed Corp.	1145	(919)552-6100
Traffic Jam Productions	1212	(913)894-4525
Trak-Air/Rair	1148	(800)688-8725
Tropic Top	1324	(407)273-0069
Tropical Sno	1030	(801)523-3850
Tube Lighting Products	743	(619)442-0577
U.S. Toy Co.	356	(800)448-5543
Ultrazone	1012	(702)734-2867
Universal Container Corp.	105	(813)376-0036
Vending Times	574	(212)302-4700
Veqtor USA	318	44/1428685660
VGS	760	(407)370-2900
Water Wars	1058	(218)568-4099
Waterloo Tent & Tarp	1241	(319)234-4679
Wave Loch Inc.	230	(702)786-3434
West Coast Netting	572	(520)692-1144
What's New/Family Fun Centers	943	(800)923-2326
Whirley Industries	473	(814)723-7600
Whitehurst Imports	560	(716)383-8460
Whitewater West	1158	(614)621-2440
Wisdom Amusement Rides	636	(970)522-7515
Wittek Golf Supply	730	(800)869-1800
Yelvington & Associates	1332	(904)713-9779
Zamperla	400	(800)888-8878

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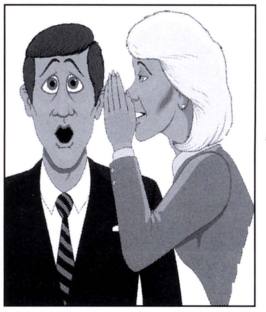
OFF THE **RECORD**



Q: What are your thoughts on the family entertainment center segment of the industry?

We talk to operators on a daily basis, whether we contact them for insight or they call us to inquire about their subscription, get a phone number, ask about certain games, etc. They willingly tell us what they think about a lot of things but are hesitant about having their thoughts and opinions published with their names attached. OK, we said, tell us what you think, and we'll print your opinions without using your name. After all, we think operators out there in the trenches have a lot to say.

A: BUILDING A BETTER MOUSETRAP

I remember about five years ago when everyone thought they could build a better mousetrap and then charge people exorbitant amounts of money to play in it. People who had no idea what they were doing got money from investors or used their own savings and opened what they called an FEC. They were placed everywhere there was an empty building, offering attractions galore. Miniature golf, go-karts, prizes, games, you name it, someone thought to put it under one roof. Unfortunately, the idea behind many of these places was to offer something for everyone. Tunnels and tubes for very young children, videos for teens, redemption games and prizes for a little older kids, and even some things for parents.

Now, I'm no genius when it comes to figuring out what works in an FEC and what doesn't, but there must be a good reason so many of these attempts failed. I think I know one reason. It's nearly impossible to get every age group under one roof and have all of them completely satisfied. Parents with toddlers look for something very different from what parents with teens look for. And speaking of that, most teens don't want to even be seen with their parents, so strike that goal. ▲

A: ARE THEY DOING THEIR HOMEWORK?

FECs huh? What do I think about them? That's a tough question to answer, because I don't feel the same way about all of them. For instance, who can deny that Dave & Buster's has been a tremendous success? Now if that is an example of an FEC, then I'd have to say that it works. But then again, I've seen about three places in my area open and close before I had a chance to form an opinion. If someone is serious about opening an FEC, they have to be willing to give it enough time to find its niche. That means there must be enough financial backing to see it lose money for awhile.

I have some games in an FEC, but they didn't even contact me until about two weeks before they opened. It seemed like an afterthought, but I soon realized that a lot of what they did was in that same category. They aren't going to make it. All it would have taken is some research and talking to people who have been there, done that. Is that really so hard to do? I'd say not, but, from the looks of things, it's harder than I think. ▲

A: INDUSTRY CREDIBILITY BOOSTED!

FECs are the greatest thing that ever happened to this industry. People are viewing our industry differently than they did a decade ago. They see mega locations with all sorts of things to do instead of a dingy arcade where teenagers hang out. There are FECs that I'd be proud to bring my grandmother to. And the best part is that she'd find something to keep her busy.

Anyone willing to invest thousands and thousands of dollars into offering entertainment for the masses should be commended. It can't be easy. These folks have boosted the credibility of our industry, because more people have visited an FEC than ever went into an arcade. I've heard the negative comments about Sega and Namco opening FECs, but I think that having them willing to put their money into FECs says a lot about our industry. Their promotions certainly help them, but it has a trickle down effect for us. The FEC industry is the FEC industry whether it's Sega, Namco, or Joe's FEC. ▲

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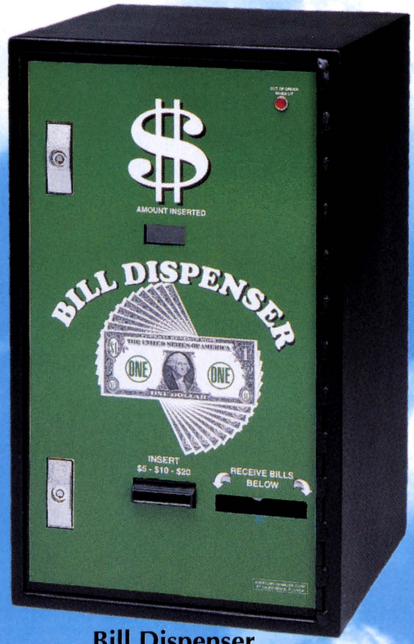

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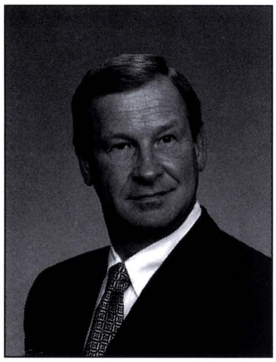


HAROLD SKRIPSKY
President of IAFEC

MANAGING CONFUSING TIMES

As in all industries, the period following rapid growth is usually known as the maturation phase. We all know that since the late 1980s the FEC segment of the industry has literally exploded with growth in all forms, shapes, and sizes, from 1,000-square-foot arcades to 150,000-square-foot mega-multiplex, sophisticated complexes with a vast array of entertainment venues and everything in between.

Along with this growth, we've seen new and exciting concepts, systems, technology, games, and attractions invented, implemented. But in some cases these developments have struggled badly or fizzled out completely. It seems as though creativity in general, earning power, equipment resale value, minimum wage, the year 2000 computer dilemma, creative marketing, the home video market, rising raw costs, large corporate and other competition, gambling proliferation, auctions and acquisitions, park districts and towns using our tax dollars to lure away our guests to their parks, the rising cost of equipment, the words Chapter 7 and Chapter 11, video violence issues, government regulations, litigation, high debt, heavy rents, and many other factors have not helped our bottom or top line one bit.

So what's new? These factors have always been there in one shape or another. What's new is the fact that many of us have not seen a meaningful sales increase in a few years, and there is one heck of a lot of pressure on the bottom line—that is if you have a positive bottom line. AND to make matters worse, you'd have to be a flaming idiot not to realize that our economy is unbelievably strong and vibrant, the consumer price index low, and, of course, feel the low unemployment rates when you try to hire.

For owners and managers, our industry's maturing can be as confusing as that of a teenager venturing forth into adulthood. We ought to have guests falling all over themselves trying to get into our doors to spend those numerous disposable dollars they have bulging in their pockets—right? Hey, maybe you're one of the lucky owners/managers who has everything going his way. But that's not the general feeling I'm picking up off the street. If you're not one of the lucky ones, you're not alone.

It can be frustrating out there right now. Our industry magazines say they have been picking up a lot of upbeat feelings, but to hear some of the manufacturers and location owners tell it, it's slow sales in coin-op. You can only blame the weather so long. And weathering the storm is our main goal in life. The following are some thoughts for you to consider should you be feeling pressure:

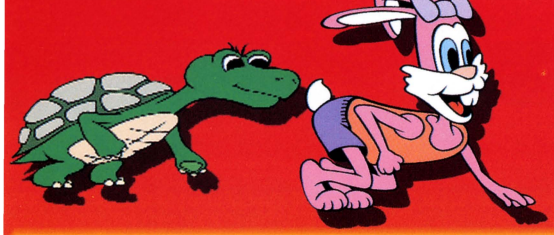
1) Of all the times, now is the time to be PROACTIVE. Fight the bunker mentality urge to spend a lot of time in your office. Get on the floor and be with your management and guests. Make sure you are delivering the best service with the best quality possible. Make damn sure your facility is spotlessly clean and in good repair.

2) Do a full and complete study, in person, of all your competition. Make a spread sheet with all the pluses and minuses of every one of them. Compare yourself in every detail; be critical of yourself, not generous.

3) Do focus group studies of your customers at all age levels. Find out what they think of you versus your competition. Ask hard questions. If you have old reservation sheets available try to select a random group from those. Offer a reward for participating, and hope you get some who have stopped coming into your facility. Quality input is extremely important.

4) NEVER stop reinvesting in your facility with things like new games, equipment, attractions, paint, carpet, theming, flags, lighting, kart bodies, landscaping, signage, a new food menu, new style birthday parties, new and more redemption items, creative merchandising techniques, and anything else that tells your guests that your are actively changing and improving your facility for them. Your message to your management is "What have we done for our customers lately?" Be tight, but don't be cheap. Justify the use of every dollar, but then spend it.

5) The worst thing you can do is



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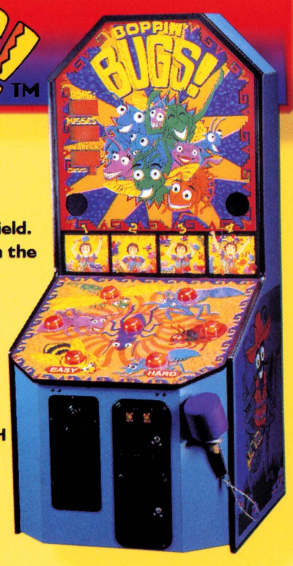

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let your best management go and/or reduce your marketing staff and dollars. These always seem to be the first target for cost cutting. Your facility thrives on new customers, and you must take care of them especially their first time. Otherwise, it's impossible to get them back the second time. While your guests are in your facility, give them a strong reason to come back with a bounce-back coupon. Don't be cheap! Give them a REAL reason to come back—and soon.

6) Take every expense line item and analyze each one thoroughly. Break each line item into its smallest elements so that you know each cost exactly. Compare these carefully to past years and note large increases. Start there. Prove to yourself that there is no way you can improve—lower—these costs without jeopardizing the facility's standards. Contracts are particularly worth looking at: linen contracts, bathroom deodorant, rental agreements, outside service contracts, bank loans, revenue-share contracts, food purchasing agreements, legal and accounting fees, maintenance agreements, etc. You are not necessarily looking to reduce one by a lot, but to reduce many of them a little.

You'd be surprised how they will add up. Generally speaking, if you have been a valued client and you approach the subject carefully, you will find the contract holder is inclined not to lose your business and will give you careful consideration. I've found that the biggest culprits of waste are the little daily things such as utility and HVAC turn-on and turn-off schedules, failing to send people home soon enough, and minor supplies like register tapes, napkins, cups, straws, paper plates, office supplies, score cards, pencils, etc. Get your management behind a "waste not, want not" program, perhaps with a incentive. They are the people who will save you the money anyhow.

7) Resist the urge to become paranoid (it's easy to do). Tighten down your controls on redemption goods, cash control, and ticket and token control. In addition, keep a very close eye on things. The last thing you want to do is get your management and staff as paranoid as you are.

"For owners and managers, our industry's maturing can be as confusing as that of a teenager venturing forth into adulthood."

8) Discuss with your distributor how you may be able to reduce your freight bills. The same goes for redemption goods. Don't take no for an answer. There are ways to help you with these, and it isn't always raising the per-piece price.

9) There are some reputable equipment leasing companies that will use lease dollars for things other than hard asset equipment if you have a good track record. I've even leased new carpet. The best place to find a good lease person or company is through your banker. The bank does business with many of them and your banker will know if the rates are fair. He'll be able to discuss the pros and cons of the deal. Try to resist the urge to lease for more than two years, three maximum. Otherwise, you will find yourself continuing to pay for equipment that is outdated and probably not in your facility anymore anyway. This is an avenue if you are tapped at the bank or don't want any more long-term debt.

10) Scour the backwaters for creative marketing ideas and try them. You have nothing to lose, and you may get a winner. Even try stuff you don't think will work just to see if it does. Only people who suffer from serious delusions feel that only their ideas are best. You have money-making ideas right this minute on your floor working for you. It's all in the asking. Old standbys like lock-ins made me a lot of money. By the way, you should give serious consideration to firing people that feel only their ideas are worth anything—you don't need that mentality working for you. It's degrading and harmful to your more intelligent people. Gather fresh ideas and new thinking with a can-do attitude for your guests.

11) Read every industry magazine you can get your hands on. The subscriptions are inexpensive and are loaded with good ideas and information to better help you manage your business. I made a habit of reading every magazine I received—cover to cover—the same day I received it (this made for many long, late evenings at home). This way I had fresh information, and I could get the magazine to my management quicker. Right or wrong, I have always believed in providing my management with as much exposure and training as feasibly possible.

I fought the urge to be intimidated by their knowledge and instead looked at it as a benefit for my business and my guests. If they left me, I blamed myself for not doing enough for that person (although rarely would I ever admit this!). And this leads to the last two thoughts.

12) Fresh blood—new ideas—are an important part of our business. Change is an absolute necessity. If you feel that your business is not reaching its potential, although you're convinced it's there in the first place, and you have tried numerous ideas, approaches, and business plans, then give very serious thought to hiring an industry professional. Certainly there is a lot of hot air out there with no substance. On the other hand there are some extremely talented individuals who would be capable of helping you analyze your business and give you suggestions. Don't be near-sighted about being proactive for your business.

The right person can help you assess your needs and give you a fresh perspective. Pick a consultant who has operated in your segment of the business and has a track record of successful projects. The International Association of Family Entertainment Centers (IAFEC) is here for that purpose, among others. IAFEC can also steer you to member operators who may be willing to talk to your or give their recommendations. If the old saying is correct that "you know that you don't

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know," fill in the blanks. Don't be cheap about this. It probably will be the best money you ever spent.

I'll tell you quick bedtime story. A friend called me one day and asked me to consult for him basically doing a complete laser tag analysis through installation. I had never done a consulting job before, but I had tremendous success with laser tag. I thought long and hard about doing it because I risked a friendship (more valuable than money) if I goofed it up. Now this operator has been around a long time, runs multiple sites, and knows his stuff. I told him I would do it. It turned out better than I expected, better than he expected because we achieved every goal and objective we set out with initially. To boot it kicked up his sales by 40 percent, and it's been almost a year now. The moral is that I got lucky, but my friend knew he didn't know something. I did, and he won big time. Now he has two laser tag units open in his FECs with more to come. He's doing them himself based on the original. By the way, this was an example only; I'm not looking for work!

13) This is a great number for me to quit on because it is a lucky number. Your lucky number! Us old-timers learned this business the hard way, one mistake at a time. It cost many of us small fortunes making mistakes. This doesn't have to be anymore. EDUCATION is everywhere. EXPERIENCE is everywhere. You are not without friends who will help you and give you input if you know how to find them. We have some of the best associations and some of the finest seminar programs available. Again, be proactive. Beg, borrow, or win the lottery, but find the money to take your management to the conventions. Attend every seminar you can. Every industry expert and soon-to-be experts will be there. Most of them are giving their time free to educate you and your management on the finer points of being in this industry. Walk the floor and talk to as many people as you can. You would be amazed at the willingness of the professional people in this industry to talk to you and listen to your story.

IAFEC, the FEC and LBE association, has grown out of the need to help operators learn and understand this business. All you have to do is go to Fun Expo, attend the seminars, keep an open mind, ask questions, and be persistent. Associations such as IAFEC have many products available designed to help you improve your top and bottom line. IAFEC is focused on your business, your top line and bottom line, and on improving the industry as a whole. All you have to do is join. The cost is quite inexpensive for what you get. Take advantage of the vast opportunities at the conventions coming up this fall. Just the interaction and rubbing shoulders with other operators is worth the trip. You owe it to yourself and your business. There is no excuse for not attending.

My final thought is that the last Nirvana in this industry was laser tag. It's alive and well for the operator who runs it right despite the inevitable growing pains. However, with few exceptions, it has been a very long dry spell on the equipment side of the equation. I truly believe that our success in the near future lies in every guest that walks through our doors. We must think harder about the things we do for and say to our guests in our facility. Sorry, there is no single silver bullet out there that will give you double digit increases yet. We must move quickly from macro-management styles to mirco-managing the smallest of details of our daily operation. Quality operations will rule the day. This is the best thing that could happen to our industry. Yes, the weeding out process will continue, but I submit to you that the many survivors who have paid great attention to their operations and guest details will be far better off and stronger when it counts the most.

Understanding the complexities of our business is easier than it has been in the past. Take advantage of everything available to you. And do it now. ▲

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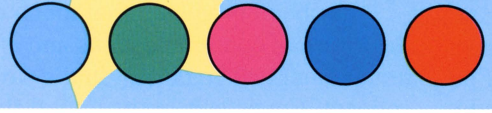

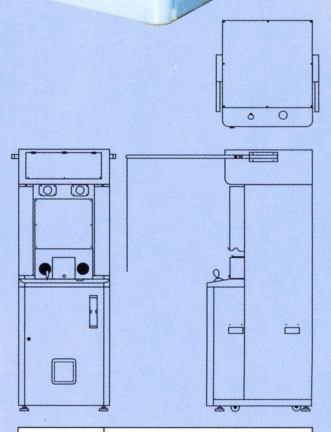

DIMENSIONS	W : 660mm
	D : 780mm
	H : 1950mm
WEIGHT	286 LB. (aprox.)

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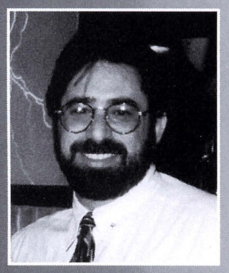
Revolution

IN A CAVE AT DISNEY QUEST



Michael C. Getlan is a third generation owner/operator of arcades and FECs and a member of IAAPA's Education, Technology, and Award Committees. He is director of operations for Amusement Consultants Ltd. of New Rochelle, N.Y., which operates 40 locations in 12 U.S. states and Central America, and is a frequent speaker at industry conventions. He can be reached at (914)576-7800; fax (914)576-6748; or via the Internet (www.amusement-consult.com).

A new age of high-tech simulation is upon us. The new Disney Quest facility on Pleasure Island in Disney World in Orlando, Fla., has a host of brand-new experiences that are truly on the cutting-edge of simulation. Disney has done what no one else could do—without a set of really deep pockets—push the limits of existing technologies.

The experiences at Disney Quest are fascinating to watch and certainly contain the seeds of life to come. There are combinations of different technologies: 3D with virtual caves, motion platforms with virtual caves, virtual reality head-mounted display systems, roller coaster simulators, touch screen computers, and similar offerings. The key to making these technolgies work is the game or story content that is Disney's forte.

HARDWARE

Many simulators have new, proprietary experiences that will dazzle and entertain guests visiting Disney World. The new Disney Quest is a great addition to the offerings available at the resort. It will balance out the other activities such as shopping, dining, and movies at the Pleasure Island entertainment area.

The impressive new technologies are new hardware configurations for the attractions themselves, in many cases never seen before. Many of these will be tweaked, changed, and adapted for the home. One type of attraction merits a closer look—the virtual 3D cave.

The Hercules in the Underworld experience is a fabulous example of high-tech at work. It is a 3D experience, achieved with a set of polarized lenses, and a great set of projection screens. The software is targeted to a younger demographic and has a very simple game play style, but the real treat is the visual experience. One cannot stand and play and not be impressed with the quality of the experience.

CAVES

A cave is simply an enclosed space with the sides of the space used for projection, including in some cases (but not in Hercules) the ceiling and floor. The sides of the space could be television screens or a rear projection movie screen for that matter, but the idea is for the player to be totally surrounded by the experience. Caves are the next stage in interactive environments for both the arcade and the home.

You can see a recent example of a simple cave in the deluxe *Lost World* game by Sega. Although this game only uses one side of the semi-enclosed space for its large image projection, it is a step in the right direction. Many other game platforms under development, such as the three-monitor motion platform by Stricor, are also moving in this direction.

It has been predicted that much of the future of communications and entertainment will be tied up in the cave concept. Caves can be imagined the size of telephone booths and small closets, or even the size of full rooms. The type of activities that would be available in these areas is limited by

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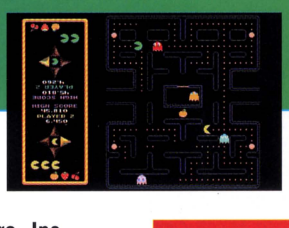
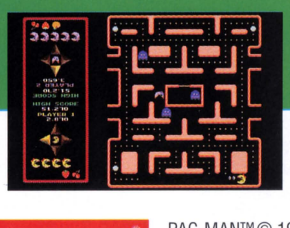
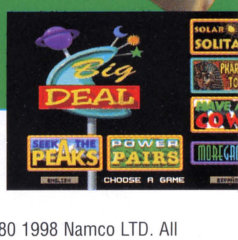
PAC-MAN™ and MS. PAC-MAN™







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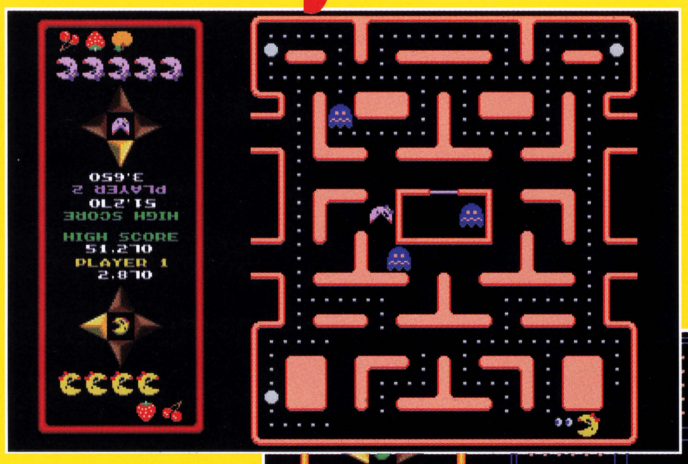
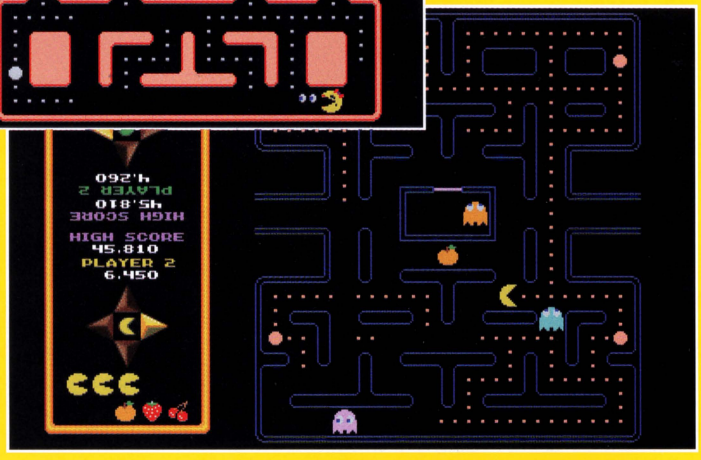
They're Back!





Galaxy Games now comes with PAC-MAN™, Ms. PAC-MAN™ and 12 hot titles with room for up to 3 additional expansion cartridges

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The Game Creator

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the imagination alone. Many of these cave uses will be good arcade attractions while some will be for in-home use only.

Indeed, these devices will be able to combine all of the benefits of teleconferencing, computing, live performance, and the Internet, and allow for greater ease of access and support. There will most likely be a 3D component to each experience. And, as with most new entertainment technologies these days, it will be available for your local arcade before it will be widespread in the average home.

LOCAL ATTRACTIONS

For these hardware devices to become part of the typical arcade mix, software with repeat appeal will be needed. Fortunately, the PC software revolution is underway, and the 3D cave will be PC-driven, so this avenue for interchangeable software will be a highly valued road for the new developer. These software offerings will include driving, shooting, sports, and fighting scenarios, as well as others.

"Caves are the next stage in interactive environments. The idea is for the player to be totally surrounded by the experience."

Of course, this all sounds farfetched and futuristic, but the truth is that the technological hardware changes needed to create this future are already on display in Disney Quest today.

Only the needs and desires of our customer base will have to be fanned like a fire for software products to be developed for game rooms in local markets. And, the money spent by Disney to create these attractions will do just that–point the way for new products to be developed for our local markets.

The time needed to create, develop, and market these types of products is far less than you would think. So, if you would like to see the cutting-edge of technology today, and a glimpse of the probable future, you can see it in Orlando. Or you could wait until it takes you by surprise going into your competitor's facility.

Disney has delivered the next medium. The hardware is no longer a topic for futurists, but for developers. ▲

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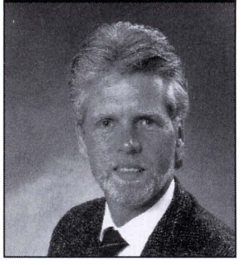
REDEMPTION
REPORT

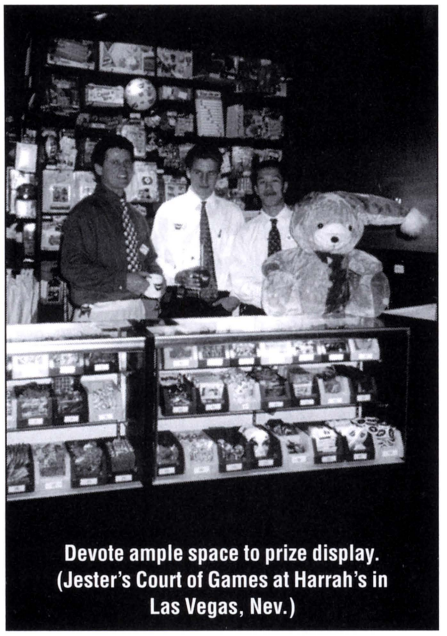


STEVE McCAUL

Strategies GUARANTEED to increase revenue

WHILE THERE ARE NO FIXED GUIDELINES FOR GAME ROOM OPERATIONS, THERE ARE PROVEN STRATEGIES THAT WILL ENHANCE YOUR BOTTOM LINE. MANY VARIABLES INFLUENCE GAME REVENUE, AND NOTHING IS "ETCHED IN STONE."

However, following are true scenarios that I have seen work. Whether you have a new location or an established location, the same advice applies.



Devote ample space to prize display. (Jester's Court of Games at Harrah's in Las Vegas, Nev.)

Make birthday parties special. (Putt-Putt Golf & Games in Mandeville, La.)

Bonus tokens

Giving bonus tokens when a customer spends $20 in the bill changer is an excellent incentive. With the influx of fast-coin games, this $5 to $7 bonus is a tremendous perceived value to the customer. The benefit to you is that you will see an increase of $20 bills in your changer.

Greater ticket awards

Be creative and generous with ticket awards. Doubling ticket payout has a tremendous perceived value to the customer.

Remember, when you increase ticket awards, in order to keep the same profit margins, you must increase your ticket value on each item. Don't get greedy—if you increase the ticket value too high, you will lose customers. This won't happen immediately, but it will affect you over time.

Quality prizes

Always reinvest in the same quality prize merchandise. Don't be stingy and buy inferior prizes just because the price seems right. Customers will realize this and take their business elsewhere.

Once you have your game selection, prize merchandise is your number one priority. This is what drives game play. Customers want the "biggest bang for their buck!" It will be a win-win situation for all.

Prize display

You never have enough display

"Having a qualified technician is not a luxury; it's a requirement."

Users' Reports

"We really liked our first Token Tech, which is why we ordered our second. I'm calling now to order our third."

"The Token Tech eliminates the need to spend hours making up rolls of 20 and 40 Tokens. We are saving enough labor cost to more than pay for it in less than two months."

"The best investment since we bought our fax machine. I can't ever imagine doing business without either one."

"We have good employees . . . The Token Tech removes the temptation for them to become "silent partners" by skimming the till."

"It's great! You should have come out with it 10 years ago."

"After using our Token Tech for Quarters, we are switching over to Tokens. Thanks to the dispenser, we got acquainted with your Token Systems."

"The Token Tech eliminates long lines at our cashier's cage. Our customers like it, too!"

"Our Batting Cage Tokens are valued at $1 each. Anyone with a high-value Token should be using a Token Tech."

"We use a larger size Token for our Carwash. All Tokens are sold through the Token Tech. It's accurate, and much faster, and it keeps our people honest."

"The first two Token Techs are excellent. We are sending our purchase order for six additional units."

"It's working just perfect. We love it!"

"For a $3 Cigarette Token, it's the only way to do business."

"We were using a system which had the "illusion of control" . . . The first shift manager counted all our Tokens. The third shift manager emptied all the cashboxes, and did a day-end count."

"The Token Tech has simplified our whole operation, and we know exactly where we stand every hour."

"We bought a similar item, made in Europe. It cost a lot more, but it never worked right, so we sent it back. Your Token Tech is far superior."

If you want to take more of these to the Bank every week . . .

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.800	10,000	.984	7,500
.882	9,000	1.000	7,500
.900	9,000	1.125	6,000

Coin	Capacity	Coin	Capacity
US Quarter	7,000	Brazilian 20 Cruzados	4,500
Canadian 25¢	8,000	Venezuela 1 Bolivar	5,000
Australian 20¢	5,000	Chile 1 Peso	4,500
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area. This summer, several operators have noted a dramatic increase in business since they enlarged their display area of prizes.

Operators must keep in mind that they are not giving up valuable game space in doing this. Prize display is what drives customers to play the ticket games in the first place.

"Once you have your game selection, prize merchandise is the number one priority. This is what drives game play."

Local cable advertising

If you contact your local cable company, they will come in and shoot a video of your location and put it to music for a very reasonable price. Depending on the deal you make, these ads will appear during children's shows, sports shows, and local programming.

I have had fantastic feedback from operators who have used this medium. Some operators have stated that they are getting telephone calls to book birthday parties immediately after the ads have run.

Discount group rates

Discounted group rates increase revenue during off-times (weekdays). You can offer an incentive package, since this is new business that otherwise would not be visiting your site at this time.

You have to be aggressive with your pricing in order to entice them. Discounted pizza (for example, all-you-can-eat for one price), double ticket values, double token days, one discounted price for the day, are all examples of promotions that have worked and have been successful. Get creative. Customers are always looking for a deal.

Coupons

Mail-order coupon value packs and sales receipt coupons are relatively inexpensive ways to target the public. You can go to your local supermarket and advertise special bonus giveaways on the back of the store's register receipts.

Group fund-raisers

Schools and other non-profit organizations are always looking for ways to raise money. This can be done through your location by offering a percentage of your proceeds on a particular day or night, which will support their group. Your reputation will benefit greatly, and this is revenue you would not have received otherwise.

Birthday parties

Offer something unique, such as a group photo, birthday person photo with a mascot, or discount passes for a return visit. Have a raffle with the birthday group, and give away a T-shirt, stuffed animal, more tokens, etc.

By doing this, you get a mailing list of potential future customers and will be able to send out reminders that they can have their birthday parties at your establishment.

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Reinvest

Put money back into your business. It can range from new games to a new rug or new furniture, a change to freshen up your game room. Merely moving the same equipment around in the room will give it a new look.

Don't be afraid to part with old equipment. There's a place for "oldies but goodies;" however, our business thrives on the impact of new equipment and new game challenges.

Maintenance

Make sure you have quality maintenance personnel. Out-of-order signs are not acceptable. There is a serious need in this industry for good technicians. Having a qualified technician is not a luxury; it's a requirement.

Putting the financial package together to achieve the opening of your facility is one thing, but ongoing service is a very important factor in the overall success of your location. Part of that service involves a maintenance plan. I can't stress this point enough. ▲

Steve McCaul is a consultant and redemption specialist with his own company, Global Equipment Exchange, in Kingston, Mass., (781)585-8600; fax (781)585-8399; e-mail (global-1@mail.idt.net).

Burdette Bremer

To theme *or not to theme*

What can you do to add impact to your miniature golf course? The answer may be adding themed elements to enhance your course and its revenue.

BURDETTE BREMER AND
RUTH ROSENQUIST

Today's theming is not little windmills and clowns. It is not churches and bridges or gorillas and lighthouses, although nostalgia still has its place.

Today's themes are so varied, they are hard to describe. One general characteristic is that they are visually appealing, detailed, durable, and impactful. They create an environment, a setting, and enhance the entertainment experience. They can be interactive, with special effects and animation.

As you think of the issue of "to theme or not to theme," think about your consumer and the message you wish to send. Think about your business objective: Do you want miniature golf to be a significant profit center or an amenity? How best can you achieve this objective?

Should your theme go beyond the standard of landscape, rockscape, and waterscape, all of which are essential basics to modern miniature golf? How can you provide for more customer smiles?

If you are among a growing number of owners looking for a marketing edge, you may have asked these questions.

Eventually, the decision becomes something of a dilemma when you discover the costs associated with a retrofit. These costs include the difficulties of access, shutdown, and the lack of economies of scale.

Though there is a solution, you have discovered that it would have been more cost-effective to have made the decision to theme at the beginning of the project. It is very advantageous to think through the issue of theming in the beginning.

Does a theme make sense?

Today's recreational customer is increasingly exposed to unique options for entertainment. Themed venues are everywhere, from Planet Hollywood to GameWorks and from The Rainforest Cafe to the Hard Rock Cafe. Shop-

ping centers themselves are increasingly becoming themed destinations.

Even golf course management companies like O.B. Sports and Arnold Palmer Golf Management are now theming their new courses. C.A. Roberts indicates that this is a way to make a lasting impression on golfers' minds.

O.B. Sports goes on to say that if golf is interesting and fun, you have an edge. Among others, they describe farm and winery themes. Several individual golf course managers also described non-golf themes. One, in the city of Aurora, Colo., uses bronze sculptures of Indians playing Shinny Ball, a game similar to golf, according to Paul Hughes in the January 1998 edition of *Crittenden Golf Inc. Magazine.*

BELOW LEFT: **Fantasyland in Seekonk, Mass., follows a New England theme.**

There is a growing awareness that to compete for the discerning consumer's discretionary income, a strong, well-executed theme will attract a large audience and appeal to a family clientele.

According to Bill Sadler, manager of Westerville Golf Center in Westerville, Ohio, "The visual appeal of a miniature golf course is very important, especially when you are located on a high-traffic thoroughfare. A theme, beautiful landscaping, and a fun course help draw in the people and keep them coming back." Intriguing theme elements provide signage that catches the eye and motivates children as well as adults.

In addition, a thoughtfully executed theme will differentiate you from the competition while creating a memorable experience. What would a child be more likely to recall—a miniature golf course with a stream, or a golf course with a whimsical castle in the air; a Western street scene or a roving pirate in a boat?

To which course would they request a return visit? Which course will they tell their friends about? Jack Miscall of Starcadia in Macon, Ga., felt that theming his course would add perceived value not only to the miniature golf course but also to his entire park. As people leave, they will feel they've been someplace extraordinary.

When contemplating a successful theme for your project, keep the following in mind:

1. How will you allocate your budget for maximum value?

2. Who is your customer? What message do you want to send?

3. Is it memorable and fun, providing entertainment value?

4. Are you serving the local market, tourists, or both?

5. How can you make a dramatic statement, as in "Wow, this is neat"?

6. Do you want a storyline to your theme?

7. Does the concept stand the test of time, or could it be a fad?

Two prime examples of successful venues that capitalized on their geographic region are Boomtown Family Entertainment Center in Sparks, Nev., and Caribbean Cove in Nevis, West Indies.

Both properties appropriately reflect the heritage of their locations. Boomtown chose to recreate an old ghost town theme due to its setting in an area renowned for mining. Desolate buildings, skeletal remains, and mining carts immerse the course player in the town's colorful history. Caribbean Cove reflects the culture of its island heritage with a Caribe Indian Village, pirates, shipwrecks, and more. The

BELOW RIGHT: **The old grist mill at Fantasyland.**

entertainment value of these courses is unrivaled.

At Fantasyland in Seekonk, Mass., the 36 holes of miniature golf built in 1990 follow a New England theme with a lighthouse, grist mill, Victorian house, water wheel, and an abundance of flowers and waterfalls from one end to the other.

Ralph Zanfagna of Fantasyland terms it "more of a happening." "We took a page out of the Disney book," adds Zanfagna. "We have a 150-foot walkway where you can watch the golfers and view the course while waiting to play."

Financial considerations

Frankly, this evidence is based largely on observation and logic, for there is no validating research that we are aware of. It is evident that the highest revenue-producing courses are themed/adventure-style courses. This is true in both non-tourist as well as tourist markets.

There are numerous examples of 36-hole themed miniature golf courses in seasonal, as well as Sun Belt climates, that are producing revenues in the $500,000-plus range. In tourist environments, these courses may be producing annual revenue in excess of $1 million.

To further illustrate the economics, this example is offered: Let's assume that by adding quality theming you can increase revenue by $20,000 annually on your 18-hole miniature golf course. Let's further assume that it costs you an additional $35,000 for the theme structures and $5,000 over five years to maintain them.

Over these five years, the total added revenue is $100,000 and the cost of the structures is $40,000. That's a worthwhile return on investment in just five years. Add to that the additional revenue generated in your other park attractions in the next five years, and the economics look even better.

How do you proceed?

Once you have made the decision to give your project a memorable theme, your next consideration is to locate a design and fabrication firm that is committed to working closely with your vision. You will also want to find a course design firm that works effectively with theme design as well.

At best, theme structures and hole designs need to work in harmony. Sometimes one firm can do it all. Typically, they will start the design process by collaborating with you on ideas.

Inspiration for the theme can arrive from a variety of resources: photographs, storybooks, movies, local icons and historical events, travel, and even childhood memories.

As these concepts and sketches are approved, the design team's responsibility will be to generate the geographic layout of the course, incorporating renderings of the proposed theme elements. At this point, preliminary costs need to be developed, and budget/design reconciliation takes place. Once done, a contract for fabrication of the theme elements and the miniature golf course would be negotiated and finalized.

Working drawings will be necessary to put the proposed elements into production. One of the most exciting stages of the theming process is actually watching the fabrication of your elements come together.

Whether you are building your project in wood or sculpting figures in fiberglass or concrete, there is a real sense of excitement in watching the final concepts come to life. You may want to visit the designer/fabricators prior to and during this phase.

Summary

Theming will not only create a memorable entertainment experience but also set your facility apart from the garden variety course. ▲

Burdette Bremer of Castle Golf International Inc. can be reached at (602)968-1955; fax (602)968-1915; e-mail (tod@castlegolf.com); and Web site (www.castlegolf.com). Ruth Rosenquist of Studio Productions Inc. can be reached at (602)967-3409; fax (602)967-4258; e-mail (studio.prod@att.com).

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JUMP START
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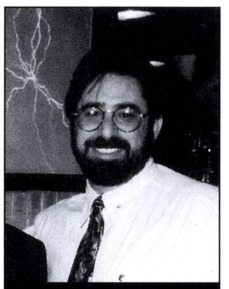
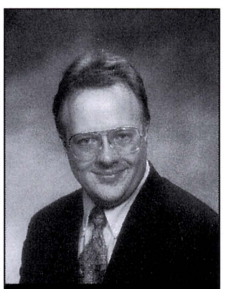
FUN EXPO '98

What started small in Atlanta, Ga., eight years ago has grown to be a must-go show for developers, investors, new and seasoned owners/operators and managers, and family entertainment center personnel on all levels.



Michael Getlan
Amusement Consultants



Vic Fortenbach
VICCO Electronics

Normalynn Cutler
Cutler Enterprises

Karyn Gitler
Showbiz Pizza Time

You could easily stay an entire week in Orlando, Fla., at the upcoming Fun Expo, considering the Location-Based Entertainment Development Program, three days of exhibits, a full roster of educational sessions (over 35), round table discussions, and special events. Talk about energy and motivation!

The Oct. 14-17 show represents an opportunity to network, learn new approaches, fine tune operations, and generally look at the business with a fresh perspective. Its scope has broadened considerably as it moved around the country to such diverse host cities as New Orleans, Nashville, and Las Vegas.

Fun Expo is sponsored by the International Association of Family Entertainment Centers (IAFEC); it is managed and produced by Reed Exhibition Companies. The exhibit floor will include over 400 exhibits pertaining to games, rides, prize merchandise, food service, laser tag, consulting firms, and much more.

Attendees who don't want to miss anything can register for the Super Pass for unlimited conference access. This includes all sessions, two round table luncheons, a free Funcyclopedia, and exhibit floor admission. The Funcyclopedia includes speaker information, guidelines, helpful articles, and all written materials from all Fun Pass sessions.

The Fun Pass affords access to all Fun Pass sessions and exhibit floor admission. You can also choose the Advanced Tracks educational sessions, the Amusement Rental Business Forum, round table luncheons, and the Location-Based Entertainment Development Program the day before everything else starts.

Here's a detailed listing:

Location-Based Entertainment Development Program

(all-day session designed for developers, investors, and those interested in entertainment real estate)

WED., OCT. 14

8:30 a.m.-10 a.m.

☞ New Entertainment Business Models: Roadmaps for Success

10:30 a.m.-Noon

☞ Location-Based Entertainment Funding: Corporate Sponsorships and Other Opportunities

1:30 p.m.-3 p.m.

☞ Building a Brand Identity: Standing Out in a Crowd of Me-Toos

3:30 p.m.-5 p.m.

☞ Through the Looking Glass: Previewing New Concepts in Location-Based Entertainment

Education

Fifty-one speakers are slated to share their expertise at the educational sessions. The list reads like a who's who of the industry, starting with Michael Getlan of Amusement Consultants and Vic Fortenbach of VICCO Electronics, both contributing writers for *Play Meter.*

Other speakers are Frank Seninsky of Alpha-Omega Amusements, Steve Hix of the International Go-Kart Association and Miniature Golf Association United States, Pat Esgate of Esgate and Associates, Karyn Gitler of ShowBiz Pizza Time, Normalynn Cutler of Cutler Enterprises, Elena Ruane of Enchanted Castle, George Smith of Namco Cybertainment, Susan Snyder-Davis of Kids Marketing Factory, Beth Standlee of Schumacker & Co., Drew Pawlak of Ultrazone, Randy White of White Hutchinson Leisure & Learning Group, and Joey Herd of KSL Lake Lanier (first president of IAFEC), to name but a few.

Sessions are divided into four divisions:

1. Fun Pass

(the core program for newcomers)

WED. OCT. 14

10:30 a.m.-Noon

☞ Budgeting Basics

☞The Future of Debit Card Systems

1:30 p.m.-3 p.m.

☞ Children's Entertainment: Creating Developmentally Appropriate Play

3:30 p.m.-5 p.m.

☞ Laser Tag—Do It Right the First Time

☞Large Menus in a Small Kitchen

THU. OCT. 15

8:30 a.m.-10 a.m.

☞ Building Your Business With Coin-Op

☞ Doing Business in South America: Optimizing Your Success

3:30 p.m.-5 p.m.

☞ Getting Spooky! Haunted Houses & Halloween

☞ Live Entertainment for Families

FRI. OCT. 16

8:30 a.m.-10 a.m.

☞ Marketing to Women

☞ The Skinny on Video Game Ratings Regulations

10:30 a.m.-Noon

☞ Creating a Birthday Party Vision

☞ Food & Beverage: How to Increase Revenues Without Breaking the Bank

1:30 p.m.-3 p.m.

☞ Ways to Find Cash Through Alternative Financing Sources

3:30 p.m.-5 p.m.

☞ Through the Eyes of Kids: Meet Our Panel of Experts

☞ Amusement Motorsports Grows Beyond Family Go-Karting

SAT. OCT. 17

9 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

☞ Low-Tech for Kids

☞ How to Handle an Accident

☞ Computer Systems for the 21st Century

2. Advanced Tracks

(for owners, operators, and managers, subdivided into operations, marketing, and training/management)

WED. OCT. 14

1:30 p.m.-3 p.m.

☞ Legal Issues Part I: Legislation (Operations)

☞ Innovative Programming to Fill the Downtime and Extend the Spending Season (Marketing)

☞ Smile Makers: Improving Guest Relations (Training/Management)

3:30 p.m.- 5 p.m.

☞ Legal Issues Part II: Employee Concerns (Operations)

☞ Marketing to Kids on the Internet (Marketing)

☞ Better Business Through Better Hiring (Training/Management)

ROUND TABLE LUNCHEONS

WED. OCT. 14

Noon-1:30 p.m.

☞ Movie Theaters

☞ Roller & Ice Skating Rinks

☞ Miniature Golf Centers

☞ Bowling Centers

FRI., OCT. 16

Noon—1:30 p.m.

☞ Small Amusement Parks

☞ Veteran Go-Karting

☞ Under 10k-Square-Foot Locations

☞ Amusement Rentals

EXHIBIT HOURS

Thu., Oct. 15: 12:15 p.m.-4 p.m.
Fri., Oct. 16: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sat., Oct. 17: 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Conference/Seminar Hours

Wed., Oct. 14: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
Thu., Oct. 15: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
Fri., Oct. 16: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sat., Oct. 17: 9 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

THU. OCT. 15

8:30 a.m.-10 a.m.

☞ The Realities of Theft: Who Can You Trust? (Operations)
☞ Enhance Your Marketing Techniques and Grow Your Circle of Customers (Marketing)
☞ Dress It!, Look It!, Act It! High Impact Employee Training (Training/Management)

3:30 p.m.-5 p.m.

☞ Sponsorships: Building Your Bottom Line (Marketing)
☞ Managing Generation X (Training/Management)

FRI. OCT. 16

9:30 a.m.-11 a.m.

☞ Effective Design, Decor, and Theming (Operations)

10:30 a.m.-Noon

☞ Maximize Your Retail Sales (Marketing)

1:30 p.m.-3 p.m.

☞ Effective Group Sales (Operations)

3:30 p.m.-5 p.m.

☞ Risk Inspection and Safety Management (Training/Management)

3. General Session

THU. OCT. 15

10:30 a.m.-Noon

☞ An Introduction to the Open Arcade Architecture

4. Amusement Rental Business Forum

FRI. OCT. 16

8:30 a.m-Noon

☞ Half-day program for a specific niche market that continues to experience growth.
For IAFEC Members Only there is a special Million Dollar Club session Thu., Oct. 15, 1:30 p.m.-3 p.m. This is a first-time gathering and discussion of trends by a team of veterans who operate million dollar-plus centers.

Special Events

If there is one city that defines a "fun" time with lots of choices for all ages, it's Orlando. Fun Expo organizers have planned an evening at Pleasure Island in Downtown Disney Thu., Oct. 15, 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m., that includes dinner and a networking reception, followed by club hopping.

Don't forget the 5th Annual Golden Token Achievement Awards Ceremony and Cocktail Reception Fri., Oct. 16, 5 p.m.-6 p.m. Check out the Silent Auction open daily near the exhibit floor for a chance to bid on valuable merchandise at below- retail cost. A membership breakfast meeting Thu., Oct. 15, 7:30 a.m. will provide an update on IAFEC activities.

Supporting associations participating in Fun Expo this year are the Amusement Industry Manufacturers Association (AIMS), the Amusement Rental Association (ARA), the Children's Entertainment Association (CEA), the International Laser Tag Association (ILTA), the International Recreational Go-Kart Association (IRGA), and the Miniature Golf Association United States (MAGUS).

For more information on Fun Expo, call 888-FUN-EXPO or (203)840-5606, or see the Web site (www.fun-expo.com). ▲

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Ken Fedesna with the product lineup.

FEDESNA OFFERS GLIMPSE *of new products*

Ken Fedesna is executive vice president and general manager of Midway Games. His department also represents the Midway coin-op products as well as the Williams and Bally pinball lines. He tells our readers what is going on with Midway, Williams, and Bally.

Q: WHAT ARE THE PRODUCT RELEASES WE SHOULD LOOK FOR FROM MIDWAY THIS FALL?

A: Our first major release is *NFL Blitz '99*, the sequel to *NFL Blitz*. We were very pleased to bring this highly anticipated game out in time for the new NFL season. We also will soon be introducing a very impressive gun game, *Carnevil*. *Carnevil* is one of the most graphically impressive coin-op games I have ever seen. There is also an entertaining storyline that has a great combination of action and humor. We expect this game to have significant long-term earnings as players navigate the wild world of *Carnevil*.

Q: YOU MENTIONED *NFL BLITZ*. THIS HAS BEEN A VERY SUCCESSFUL GAME FOR MIDWAY. WHAT IS IT ABOUT THIS GAME THAT HAS MADE IT SO POPULAR WITH OPERATORS?

A: The key to the success of *Blitz* is the strong long-term

earnings. Operators around the country have reported consistent earnings all year, even after the end of the NFL season. The game also has performed well in bars, bowling alleys, and other street locations, so operators have a lot of options for rotating the game and maximizing earnings.

Q: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE NEW FEATURES WITH *NFL BLITZ '99*?

A: The first major change is that *Blitz '99* is a four-player game. This has had a significant impact on the earnings potential. The NFL team rosters have also been updated to be current for the new NFL season, including superstar rookie players.

NFL Blitz '99 also has a very unique feature designed to pull home video game players into arcades and street locations.

Every *Blitz '99* game has a card reader that will read memory cards from the Nintendo 64 home game system. Players can design plays on the home version of *NFL Blitz*, save them to the memory card, then take them to the arcade to use on *NFL Blitz '99*. We expect this to provide incredible exposure for the coin-op game, as millions of home players will have the chance to design plays for use in the arcade. The coin-op game and the card reader will also be included in a multi-million dollar advertising campaign for the home product.

NFL Blitz '99

Monster Bash

Q: WHAT IS THE OUTLOOK FOR WILLIAMS AND BALLY PINBALL?

A: Although the pinball market has been down for the past two years, it is still very clear to us that there is a pinball market. The first sign is the strong used pinball market. We've also had success with some recent titles, *Champion Pub* and *Monster Bash* (debuted at AMOA), that demonstrate that operators are still very interested in high-earning pinball games.

We are also working on some new pinball technology designed to attract the attention of new players, so we can expand the pinball market.

Q: WHEN WILL WE SEE THE NEW PINBALL TECHNOLOGY?

A: We expect to have a product unveiling at the ATEI show in London in January.

Q: WHAT'S GOING ON WITH *TOUCHMASTER*?

A: We've recently made two major introductions to the *Touchmaster* touch screen product: First, *Touchmaster 5000* is our latest major software upgrade designed to keep the product fresh and the earnings high for operators. This is the fifth software upgrade in the two years since we started shipping *Touchmaster,* each one focused on having some new, unique games that will catch player's attention.

We've also introduced a new upright cabinet that was designed specifically to maximize player comfort and make the game easy to collect and service for the operator. The upright cabinet has been earning well at a wide variety of places. I know in Chicago alone there are upright *Touchmasters* earning well in a country western bar, a muffler shop, and several large arcades.

Touchmaster

One other important point I'd like to make on *Touchmaster* is the reliability of the product. The greatest software in the world won't earn a single quarter if the game is down, so we've put a lot of resources into the quality and reliability of *Touchmaster.* We are proud that *Touchmaster* is obtaining a reputation as the most reliable touch screen product in the industry.

Q: CAN YOU EXPLAIN WAVENET AND UPDATE US ON THE STATUS OF THE TEST?

A: Wavenet is our state-of-the-art network technology that allows for real-time linked video game play at multiple locations. For example, *San Francisco Rush* players in Los Angeles can race against *San Francisco Rush* players in Chicago with games connected via Wavenet. The technology is impressive, and we have recently expanded the test in California that was started in the spring. There are now almost 100 *San Francisco Rush* games linked via Wavenet at arcades and street locations in Los Angeles and San Francisco. We are measuring the impact of the Wavenet technology on earnings. We also are hosting some skill-based tournaments on the Wavenet network to measure the popularity of multi-location tournaments with players.

The test results so far have been impressive, as earnings increase significantly when games are connected to the Wavenet network. It is clear that network technology is going to play an increasing role in coin-operated games.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY WORDS OF WISDOM FOR THE INDUSTRY?

A: The Industry is in a period of transition. The most important thing for all of us is to remain focused, aggressive, and remember that the ultimate customer is the player. We need to keep the player interested in coin-op by providing him with the latest innovative games and not be complacent. If we don't offer continuous new stimulation to the players they will turn to other forms of entertainment. ▲

Williams parts department sets new standards of excellence for the future

If you add up all the Williams and Bally pinball games in operation around the world and combine that number with all the Midway and Atari video games in operation, you'll realize that there are hundreds of thousands of games that together generate millions of dollars every day for operators.

Two critical elements in keeping these games in top condition are parts and technical service. Distributors and their customers must have fast, reliable access to parts and technical service to keep games earning at their maximum potential. The Williams parts department (which represents Williams, Bally, Midway, and Atari) is quickly moving towards an ambitious goal: expanding efficiency and providing elite service never before accomplished in the coin-op industry.

"We want to be like a high-end sports car, with high performance and quick responsiveness to surrounding conditions," said Chuck Passarelli, general manager of the parts division. "We're not all the way there yet, but we've taken some major steps forward, and we are moving towards maximum efficiency."

One of those major steps is the completion of a new 20,000-square-foot facility for the parts department. Passarelli and his team recently relocated to the new Waukegan, Ill., facility, which allows them to ship 500 or more line items per day to as many as 100 different locations.

"We now have highly efficient operation workflow thanks to the storage and inventory systems in place at the new facility," said Passarelli. "It is a big step forward that allows us to immediately process and fill customer orders."

While the new facility is a major component, Passarelli lists teamwork as the vital element in the evolving success of the parts division. "Everyone on the team works together and understands the importance of parts to the coin-op industry. We have collectively embraced the challenge of evolving into a flexible, nimble, responsive organization," he explained.

Plans for the future include focusing on the use of new technology to add to efficiency. For example, an electronic interaction program is in development, which will allow customers to order parts on-line.

"All of our projects have the same overall goal," said Passarelli. "We want to make the acquisition of quality parts fast and easy for our customers. Distributors and operators will experience even better response and availability of parts and technical support. They can look forward to industry-leading efficiency in the months ahead." ▲

Coinman

RYCK ZARICK

While attending the Ohio Coin Machine Association convention, executive director Paul Corey introduced me to operator Ryck Zarick of All-Star Vending, and suggested that I'd enjoy talking to him. If you know Paul, you just don't say no to him. Ryck turned out to be one of the brightest, knowledgeable operators I've had the pleasure of meeting.

I was determined to feature him as our "Coinman" but he wasn't quite so sure. He was reluctant, naming excuses like he didn't think he was a big enough operator to have opinions anyone would want to hear. Boy, was he wrong! He was everything Paul said he'd be and more.

When did you get into the coin machine business?

I remember it well. I was a sophomore in high school and during summer break my job was changing the price on cigarette vending machines from 30 cents to 35 cents, which ages me immediately! My father Edward Zarick was an employee of Star Vending, which was a subsidiary of American Automatic Vending (AAV), a big company in Ohio and the surrounding states at the time. I continued to work for Star part-time while I was in college. I never finished college but I continued working for the company.

In 1986 my father and I, along with a friend and his previous partner Pete Morris, bought the Toledo operation from AAV when it decided to consolidate. We changed the name to All-Star Vending. Back when my father was manager of Star Vending we had started a consolidation effort to bring the business closer to Toledo and get away from some of the areas that were stretching us too thin. In 1994 my father passed away, leaving the business to Pete and me. Early in 1997, George Sares, an employee of All-Star, and Chuck Gerber, bought out Pete's share of the business, and we reorganized the company. Chuck owned Superior Catering and brought that operation into our building. Superior now supplies our fresh prepared food needs.

What kind of a route do you have now?

We are a full-line operator with amusement, music, and all types of vending. It's about a 50/50 split between amusement and vending. Vending is probably the most labor intensive of our operations. The major difference in operating vending and amusements is inventory. However, I don't think you have as much control with vending as you do in amusement with the meters and such that allow you to watch your collections closer.

–by Valerie Cognevich

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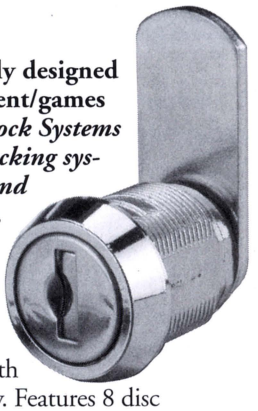

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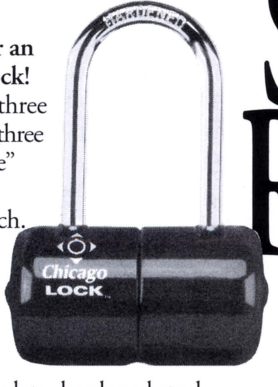

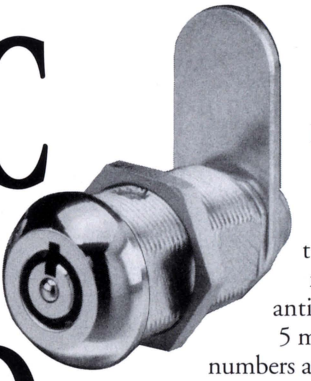

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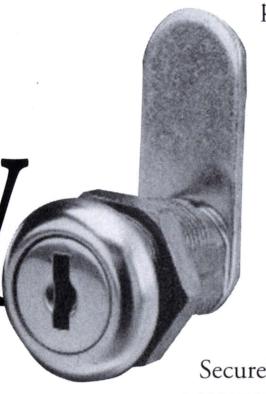

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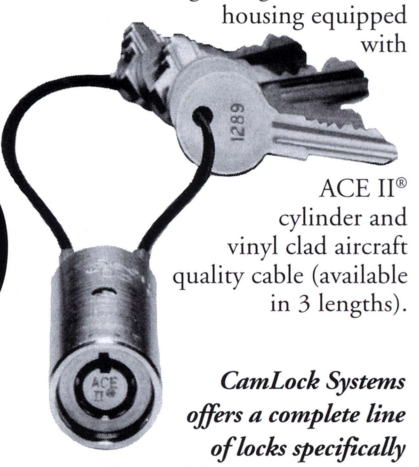

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Coinman

RYCK ZARICK

We have downscaled considerably since the AAV days. As an example, in the heyday the company had nearly 50 employees and 1,500 cigarette machines. Today we usually have less then 10 employees and operate less than 50 cigarette machines.

That's a big downturn. How long did it take to go from 1,500 to less than 50 cigarette machines?

We had a large downturn over a five-year period beginning about 1980. Then there were several periods when the cigarette prices went up that we lost a lot of machines. Of course, people had slowed down on smoking and there were some other reasons. When the teen smoking issue came up, we went through our route and weeded out a significant number of machines that were in potentially accessible places for teenagers.

At the time we were fighting a local battle. They were trying to ban cigarette machines completely in Toledo. We thought it was in our best interest to show them that we were willing to take the step to help curb the teen smoking.

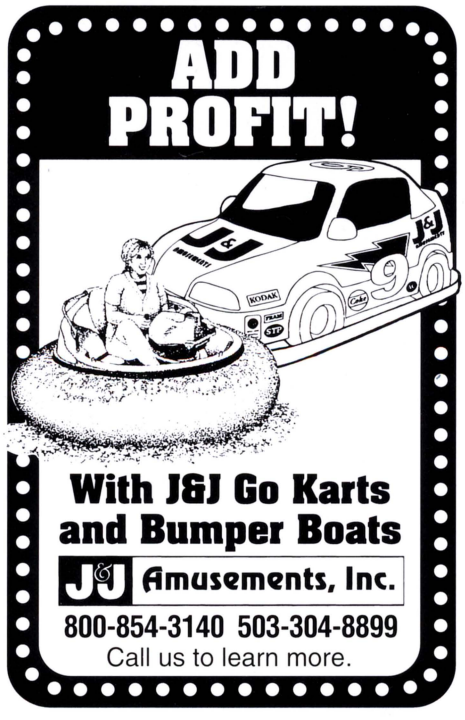
Did it help?

Probably not. That's not where most of the teen smoking comes from. All of the studies, including the latest CDC studies, show that only about two percent of cigarettes bought by teens come from cigarette vending machines. Ironically, although I'm an avid non-smoker, I stood up in front of the city council and argued issues. I tried to explain that vending machines were not the problem.

I really don't see us being in the cigarette business much longer. Economically, we've phased ourselves out of it slowly so there will not be as big of an impact. But it's still an economic impact. That's why we're hoping to get some kind of buy-out or other compensation from the government or from the tobacco companies.

Obviously, that was a major part of your business at one time. How have you replaced it?

I would say that most of the cigarette business has been replaced with vending. As far back as I can remember the AAV companies had been in vending. Prior to my father joining the AAV companies, he had several other companies of his own that he operated. One was a cigarette route and one was a music and game route. So, although the full-line operation of AAV was a new thing for him to come into, it was a segment of the business that I grew up with.



In recent years we have put even more effort into growing our vending operation. As an example, we have replaced almost 100 percent of our snack machines within the last five years.

As a street operator what do you see as the major concerns?

As far as video games there are a couple of major concerns. The first is that the cost keeps going up. Our customers always want the newest pieces which we can ill afford to provide everyone. One of our solutions is to secure better splits for us with our customers for the larger pieces. The other issue is, of course, possible legislation on game content. Hopefully, the industry will police itself on this as soon as possible before it's policed for us. Honestly, we haven't taken any steps yet, but I plan to talk to AMOA and find out how we can get an adequate supply of stickers and parental notices. I'm not sure how long it will take us to get to 100 percent, but we will do it. Every operator should.

Have you had complaints from your locations on video games that were too violent?

Last summer we had *House of the Dead* in one of our largest arcades associated with a resort. The manager was called on the table about the game by a group of people who were visiting the resort. Essentially they publicly humiliated him. Needless to say, he asked us to remove that game. Luckily we have a very good working relationship with our distributor and they graciously took the machine back and were able to resell it. And, of course, it was the number one earning machine at the time.

Had you really felt that strongly about it before you had this first-hand experience?

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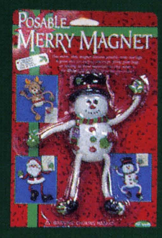

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Actually yes. We refused to buy *Mortal Kombats* for some time. I personally didn't care for the content. Although we finally bought one of the later models, by then there had been enough saturation so that it wasn't so controversial. But I really didn't see the issue with *House of the Dead*. I played it myself and thought it was a fun game. Even though we had it toned down as far as the programming options would allow, for some reason that game really impacted people more than some of the others. At the same location we had an *Area 51* and personally I didn't see a big difference. I guess the realism just brought that machine over the edge, plus it was very popular. Some other games were right at that edge, but this just crossed over.

Do you see any solution as far as price and content?

I don't really for price. And I can't really blame the manufacturers. I don't believe they are exorbitant on some of their deluxe pieces, and if the game doesn't fly for them then they have a tremendous financial loss. Operators have to be very careful about what they purchase and the manufacturers have to be equally careful about what they decide to build.

On content, I think the manufacturers are victims of the market. They build what they think the market wants. However, I do believe they could provide us as operators with more programming options to control the content.

Everyone has talked about the PC-based games for coin-op. What do you think?

I think it will eventually be good for operators. I think it's a little premature because there is a reliability issue with hardware and with software. Granted, there are a ton of computers out there running Windows 95 and now 98. But I still see Windows 95 crash a lot and I'm sure that 98 does the same thing on occasion. I don't believe the reliability is where it needs to be on a commercial level—stand-alone, self-maintaining. I've heard stories from companies that have attempted to use a PC-based system and weren't able to accomplish it because of the reliability. That substantiates what I've felt right along. We have machines that are PC-based and have had some problems. But it's still early.

Do you see the solutions to those problems coming fast enough to where this will be viable within the very near future?

I think that depends on Microsoft. They are the ones with the ultimate control over the operating system. If they don't make improvements on their end, they will never reach us. I do see it happening, and because of the mass production of PCs, it should give us more games. And I don't see how they couldn't be cheaper, when it now costs me thousands to buy a piece of equipment, yet I can go buy a CD-Rom for $6 that does essentially the same thing on my PC.

Were you one of the operators who tested the National Amusement Network Inc. (NANI), since the test was conducted in Ohio?

No, although we were offered the opportunity. We didn't see the logic of testing NANI in a game that had already outlived its usefulness. Not that we had any problem with the concept of it. We also couldn't justify the cost of the system at the time.

Were you in contact with fellow operators in the area who did test it?

Yes. And from what we heard we're glad we didn't participate. However, if ITS can do it with its *Golden Tee Golf*, then I don't see why NANI can't. Maybe there are just too many fingers in the pie.

In your business, what is making the most money for you right now?

Pool tables are steady earners and are always going to make money. We haven't done leagues ourselves; we sub-contract leagues to other people. It hasn't been terribly successful. The only way for it to be successful is for us to finally tackle it ourselves. I know it's been successful for many others.

But back to the question. The deluxe video pieces make us the most money. But obviously they cost more. The return on investment for our company on the deluxe pieces has been very good. But that's because we buy very few, we are extremely selective, and we secure better commissions for ourselves. We aren't the first to rush out and buy a new game. We want to see it proven a little. We have *Lost World, Alpine Racer 2, California Speed,* and *San Francisco Rush The Rock* for instance. Personally I like some others but I have to be careful because machines that I like personally don't always work out. I have to temper my enthusiasm for a piece by what I hear from others and read.

What system do you have for buying video games?

I like the trade magazines and I communicate with friendly competitors. We have a pretty good network locally. A number of competitors are generous about sharing information with each other. We've always been the leader in our area for sharing technical information. We get a lot of phone calls asking what we do about this or that.

Did you get involved in this network through the association?

Coinman

RYCK ZARICK

Actually, the association had a major part in it. We are members of the Northwest Ohio Music Operators Association and, of course, we belong to the OCMA. We don't belong to AMOA at this time. We felt that as members of OCMA, since it was such a premier state organization in the country, we had our lines of communications open. I can't say that is the primary reason, but joining AMOA was something that we never budgeted.

There are times when we are very lucky to be in Ohio and belong to the OCMA. I always felt that it is important to join the state associations. However, since Paul [Corey] drafted me to the OCMA board, I have come to appreciate the membership even more. Since we are on the subject here, can I plug the OMCA Web site? It is at (http://www.the-ocma.org) and although it is a modest site by today's standards, we do boast the largest free links to other industry related sites.

What is your opinion of DVD?

You brought up the question during the seminar at our state show about what impact DVD would have on our industry. The answer from the speaker was, "none." I don't entirely agree with him, but I understand where he's coming from. I think he was saying that it's going to happen without making any great impact, that's all. It will be a natural, incremental progression. There are DVD videos available right now at your local media outlets.

A couple of the manufacturers I talked to at our state show implied that there is very little to prevent them from swapping out the current audio player for a DVD player, throwing a monitor on the jukebox, and having video capabilities. And yet the DVD player will still play audio CDs. I see that happening relatively soon.

On the other hand, I don't see the CDs themselves dying that soon. I think the player may go before the actual CDs do. In other words, your player is going to be multi-format instead of single format. Right now you have an audio CD player, but you have a DVD player that will play audio CD also. Why have a CD player when you can have a DVD that plays both? We are already seeing the major manufacturers of PCs installing DVD players instead of CD-ROMs. The DVD players will play them all. You can go buy a DVD video and stick it on your PC at home and watch a movie. If that's happening right now, how long will it be before it affects our business? It shouldn't be long at all.

If once a month, you visited stores like Media Play or Best Buy that sell DVDs and inventory how many DVD selections are available, you'll see a geometric progression. There are more and more every time you go in. And I expect there will be a rapid jump real soon now because Disney and another big company finally broke down and said, "Yes, we'll do this." From what I understand, Disney was the biggest holdout to going to DVD for its movies.

Of course you are talking about movies, so it would make sense to put movies on DVD since it holds much more information. But what about other applications?

Even in the applications for our industry, as far as jukeboxes are concerned, the DVD may be a better choice for music videos. As soon as you say video you are talking about a higher band width content than you need for audio. Audio doesn't need nearly as much as video. Even to do a music video you need more space and the DVD will allow you to produce that a lot easier.

"All of the studies, including the latest CDC studies, show that only about two percent of cigarettes bought by teens come from cigarette vending machines."

But why wouldn't manufacturers be considering DVD for video games?

I think that could happen real soon. That may be the first thing that happens for the same reason that when you buy a standard PC, as I mentioned before, it comes with a DVD. I don't see that being any different in our industry once the price point comes down to where it's not more expensive to buy a DVD than a CD. Why then would anyone bother with a CD-ROM?

Since you brought up music, how do you feel about the digitally downloaded jukebox?

One of the speakers at the OCMA show said that one of the downfalls of digital music is that with so much music to choose from, the customer can take a long time to make his choice. I'd never thought about that before. As an operator, I know that I don't want to see customers taking an hour to decide what to play on the jukebox.

As an example, if I try to find something on the Internet, I could take an hour to find what I'm looking for. In the meantime, I may stumble on tons of things and there's an avalanche of information. First of all, it takes a long time to get to where you want to go. Once you find it, you

Coinman

RYCK ZARICK

are avalanched with it. Then you have to sift through that to find the specific information you want. We don't want people sitting in front of a machine to do that. You don't want every single song on the jukebox, you want it tailored to the customers at that location.

I also don't think that downloading is cost effective—yet. But I'll be the first to say that it will most likely happen in the future. I can remember when the 2,400 baud modems came out. They said, "This is it, we can't go faster." Now its up to 56,000. It's done with tricky compression and multiple carrier methods. So the 2,400 baud modem was not the ultimate after all. It shows how fast technology advances.

We'll probably experiment with downloaded music, but we don't have plans to replace 100 percent of our jukeboxes. We haven't even replaced 100 percent of our 45s. About 35 percent of our jukeboxes are 45s. Those locations just don't justify a CD jukebox, so they certainly won't justify a downloadable jukebox.

Can you still get the music you need on 45s?

Not like we or our customers would like. But it's adequate for most accounts. It wouldn't be adequate to maintain the accounts where we have our top of the line CD players. I don't think you can even buy a brand-new 45 jukebox, although I don't know why anyone would want to. Eventually, we'll rotate our older CDs into the locations that now have 45 jukeboxes. And who's to say that we won't be replacing those CD jukeboxes with digitally downloaded ones in the future.

I guess that digitally downloaded music and increased band widths are two examples of technology affecting our lives. What is your opinion on technology?

We put an awful lot of faith in technology. As much as I like it and use it, the more I learn about it the more it scares me. We are becoming way too dependent on it. Simple malfunctions that we don't consider can have catastrophic affects for us. Remember just a few months ago when the satellite glitch had everyone scrambling in a panic because they couldn't use their pagers and cell phones. Think of that on a much larger scale.

It's ironic that in a time of technology running wild there seems to be a renewed interest in the classics. Do you operate any of them?

People love nostalgia; look at the jukeboxes that look like the old favorites. We have a *Pac-Man* in one of our arcades and it does great. It attracts a customer that probably would not put a quarter (or dollar) in one of our deluxe machines. And it's not just folks that were youngsters when it came out that are playing it. You'd be surprised. There is a group of young people who are just not technically savvy and are possibly alienated by it. But they just enjoy that simple *Pac-Man* game and don't have to think too hard. It's just fun.

Being an operator with day-to-day responsibilities, do you have any other significant issues?

We touched on most of them. Among the things that have come to bother me more and more, especially after being involved in the association, are the arbitrary decisions made by governments. We have seen it locally and even nationally. Our industry is targeted regularly at every level, but the local seems to be the worst because they are always re-inventing the wheel. They don't seem to look at other localities to see how they have handled an issue successfully or unsuccessfully.

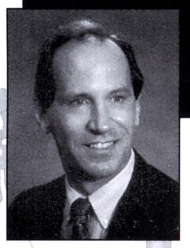
"What many in this industry don't understand is that if and when things like this happen in states with no operators association, they often pass without challenge."

They'll adopt a policy just whimsically. The issue in Florida which would have banned anyone under 18 from playing video games was horrible.

What many in this industry don't understand is that if and when things like this happen in states with no operators association, they often pass without challenge. It is a major reason to support the state association. I never understood how really important it was until things happened to us locally. We had that issue with tobacco a few years ago in Toledo where they wanted to ban cigarette vending machines. But the association was ready and able to counter it. You have to be ready and have to keep in tune with the organization.

Our association has handled many issues we are aware of and probably quite a few that we are not aware of, too. The OCMA has good contacts and the ability to educate. That's a big issue with people in government, they are just not educated about our industry. Once they become educated they often tend to agree with us. It's amazing how some will do a 180-degree turn once they learn all the facts. ▲

Ryck maintains a Web site (http://www.allstar-vending.com) and can be reached at this e-mail address: (ryck.zarick@toltbbs.com).



TOM FRICKE

The best HOPE

Tom has been diligent about covering specific issues in regard to redemption and how the laws in various states affect it. This time he's taken a different direction to give us his assessment of the industry in general.

Nationally, the gross revenues of the industry are, according to the most optimistic reports, stagnant. According to the less optimistic industry reports, they are in decline. The less optimistic report shows the industry at a gross annual revenue of $8 billion for calendar year 1996—an amount several billion dollars less than the gross industry revenue 10 years before. The more sanguine industry report indicates that in 1986, total industry revenue was just under $6 billion; 10 years later, in 1996, the total industry revenue was about the same at slightly over $6 billion.

According to one recent industry report, the decline trend with respect to substantially all types of coin-op amusement equipment is illustrated in the attached chart.

These by-line totals bespeak a decline which is masked by the aggregate revenue number, which would otherwise indicate only an industry that has not grown in the last 10 years. Industry executives and analysts attribute the decline in revenue to the following factors:. most notably, the rise in popularity of the Internet among the youthful segment of the industry's market with the entertainment opportunities on it, together with the rise in popularity of consumer game software which now makes high quality graphics, simulation, and game play available for home entertainment. This means that the consumer who used to patronize the above forms of location-based participatory amusement now has much less expensive computer amusement alternatives, of substantially the same quality as those traditionally offered in arcades, right in his home.

Industry observers believe that this phenomenon has been a body blow to the provider of coin-op amusement in public venues. According to a recent interview published in *Play Meter,* "The home computer-based video game provides to the consumer a quality of game play equal to and in some cases better than game play available in public venues. For a cost equal to one or two visits to a video arcade or a few hours of game play in another public venue, a consumer can now purchase game software for his home computer and enjoy unlimited time game play, often in interaction with other players at their computers at remote and/or dispersed locations.

In the early days of arcade video, few consumers had home computers, and home video game systems were primitive. With the market in this condition, the major resources for game software development were allocated to computer platforms provided for

Type of Equipment	Historic High Weekly Revenue	1995 Weekly Revenue	1996 Weekly Revenue
Shuffleboard	$33.00	$28.00	$28.00
Air Hockey	140.00 *(1993)*	83.00	86.00
Kiddie Rides	60. 00*(1990)*	56.00	42.00
Foosball	47.00 *(1993)*	29.00	32.00
Electronic Darts	72.00 *(1987)*	51.00	45.00
Cranes/Merchandisers	251.00 *(1986)*	100.00	100.00
Rotary Merchandisers	not available	133.00	109.00
Merchandise Redemption	292.00 *(1993)*	130.00	121.00
Pool Tables	141.00 *(1991)*	85.00	90.00
Jukeboxes	170.00 *(1993)*	108.00	103.00
Pinball	120.00 *(1993)*	66.00	62.00
Video Games	140.00 *(1981)*	97.00	95.00

public use in public venues. In other words, the quality of experience available in a public venue from computer generated game play was superior to that available in the home.

Now 15 years after the video boom started, the situation is the reverse. The installed base of home computers and computer game systems is sufficiently large enough that game software is developed first for this market and is adapted to serve the public venue market as a secondary business. The public venue operator is thus faced with an untenable business model.

The operator must purchase new video games in either kit or dedicated form, often at a cost well more than double the cost of the same product 10 years ago. If the public responds enthusiastically to the product, the enthusiasm is short-lived, because as soon as the public's response can be measured, the game becomes available for home play.

Accordingly, consumers now have substantiality no reason to go to public venues to play computer generated games not available to them in their homes. In addition, it is generally believed that the allure of home game play and Internet game play is sufficient to markedly reduce the amount of time which consumers are willing to spend playing games in public venues.

It is understood by many that the location-based coin-op amusement game industry is cyclical and is driven by innovations in technology and content. This being the case, no breakthrough innovations in technology have become available for several years; none is expected to revitalize the industry anytime soon, despite the claims and promises that we encounter. A recent spurt of new technology was virtual reality: a 3D database presented through immersive means such as eye-wear or an enclosing cockpit. This new form of public entertainment received a great deal of hype in the early '90s, but proved to be a failure. At present, virtual reality as a form of public entertainment has all but disappeared from the marketplace, and the most notable manufacturer of virtual reality games has ceased doing business as a going concern.

At the same time that location entertainment operators have suffered a drought in content, a lack of technical innovation, and a shrink in their market, they have also experienced a radical increase in the cost of their equipment. Entertainment operators have, as the cornerstone of their business model, access to public venues operated by others. At present, there is little that the operator can do with this access with respect to the traditional forms of coin-op amusement. Other portable coin-op equipment which they might offer to the same venues provides little comfort or hope. The operator is even losing cigarette vending as an attractive source of revenue. The recent federal legislative proposals and a wave of municipal prohibitions now render cigarette vending an unattractive business.

For years, the entire coin-op industry had hoped that currency reform would help reduce the market shrinkage. Beginning in 1988, bills were annually introduced in Congress to provide for a new design for the $1 coin, and at the same time remove the $1 bill from circulation. According to the industry's hope, with $1 bills out of circulation, $1 coins would come into more frequent use. Coins in the pocket are normally considered to have no value and, therefore, are spent more freely than are bills in the billfold. Accordingly, consumers would again spend money on coin-op services and goods of all types, as they had in the '70s. Then a satisfying period of game play could be purchased for the deposit of 25 cents.

But public venue game play costs much more than 25 cents today. The consumer who does not carry significant quantities of $1 coins will not consider such an expenditure to be in essence "free" or at least "painless." This year Congress finally provided for a redesigned $1 coin, but in doing so failed to enact the key piece of the proposal—withdrawing $1 bills from circulation. Accordingly, it is expected that currency reform will do little to stem the shrink in the market for coin-op entertainment services.

Operators had also sought to attenuate the increase in their cost of amusement equipment by purchasing it abroad and importing it. Until 1994, such a practice normally resulted in a copyright violation and would subject the importer to injunction and damages. In 1994 Congress amended the copyright law for a trial period, to make it clearly lawful to purchase game software abroad and import it privately, as opposed to purchasing it

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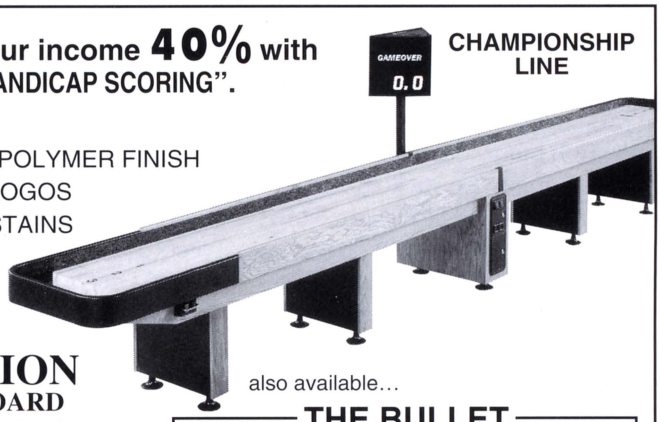

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only through U.S. distribution channels authorized by the author of the software or the owners of the author's rights.

The operator's ability to import game software outside of the manufacturer's authorized U.S. distribution channels was important to the operator for the simple reason that many of the recognized manufacturers' game software products were available for purchase in foreign countries as kits costing much less than the dedicated-only versions available here.

The trial period for parallel imports, which expired in 1997 and has not been renewed, allowed the operator to purchase abroad new games in kit form available in the United States only as dedicated. A recent decision of the U.S. Supreme Court has established that the U.S. citizen has the right to re-import U.S. goods that have been exported subject to prescribed distribution channels. The Supreme Court has not settled the question as to whether the U.S. citizen has any right to import foreign goods outside of authorized distribution channels. Accordingly, the operator's hope to lessen the relentless increases in his cost of foreign produced software-based games appears at this point to be an unrealistic one.

One form of coin-op service vending that has been popular during the last year is new technology applied to the traditional coin-op photo booth. It is believed that the new generation of coin-op photo booths, which present whimsical backgrounds to a facial shot, sometimes permiting the customer to "morph" his photo image and present not a single passport-style photograph but a sheet with a plurality of photographs on stickers, has earned the public's enthusiasm. However, the limited number of purveyors of such equipment have retained control over their distribution. They do not sell their equipment but rather lease it directly to the venues which they select on a revenue-share basis. The ordinary operator who serves small venues with small clusters of equipment cannot even obtain photo sticker machines. To make matters worse for the operator, this small number of photo sticker equipment manufacturers have been embroiled in patent infringement litigation against each other.

Beginning in the mid-'80s, many entertainment operators believed that the practice of awarding prizes to successful players of lawful coin-op games of skill might be a promising way to sustain or even increase their revenues. Initially, this idea worked. However, the practice of awarding prizes must be carefully managed, because in some jurisdictions, if the game involves a certain degree of chance as well as skill, it is a criminal offense to offer a prize for successful play.

This line of business was difficult enough because the laws on the point in almost all jurisdictions are vague. However, during the '90s there has been an increase in all forms of licensed and lawful gambling, including state lotteries, riverboat and mountain-top casinos, and even gambling on Indian reservations. In all states that have recently allowed lawful gambling, changes to state constitutions and state statutes have been required. In some of these, the changes have resulted in an outright prohibition of the practice of awarding value for success in play of games of skill.

It has always been the operator's dream to find some way to profit from the rise of lawful gambling. Over the last 10 years, many have endeavored to get into the gambling business by appealing to their legislatures to authorize them to operate poker machines in public venues, subject to a substantial tax or revenue share, payable to the state government. In almost every state, bills to this effect have been introduced by sympathetic legislators again and again over the last eight years but rarely enacted. With apologies to Oregon, South Dakota, South Carolina, Louisiana, and now West Virginia, I have to conclude that the operator will never benefit from video lottery terminals (VLTs) in a populous, commercial state.

In such a beleaguered industry, it would not be surprising to find a number of notable business failures.. These are easy to find in the coin-op and location-based amusement industries. Too many enterprises in our industry have slid into insolvency in the last two or three years. Innovation is needed. Badly. The two most promising innovations do not involve cutting edge technology or prohibitive equipment expense. They involve existing technology—and prizes. One innovation is tournament skill-only game play for prizes. The other is games of chance and skill mixed, for merchandise prizes. (The latter would have been regarded as gambling in past decades.)

Both of these innovations are profoundly affected by the state of our laws. It's therefore a key strategy for our collective survival and prosperity as an industry that these laws be made to fit our two best hopes. And how surprisingly easy it can be to accomplish this! Even those legislators who present themselves as implacably opposed to the spread of gambling have no beef with amusement.

Most are willing to reconsider how the difference between the two is to be defined. New Jersey is a fine example of redefinition. Not too many decades ago, it was a crime in New Jersey to award a prize to the winner of a tennis tournament. That would be a gambling crime, according to statute. Now games of mixed chance and skill for small merchandise prizes are officially called "amusement games."

The law which changed their name was not only passed by the state legislature, it was put out for local-option referendum and won. Overall, proposals to redefine both gambling and amusement have succeeded in the legislature, where proposals to allow the operator to get into gaming via video lottery terminal games of chance for larger cash prizes have mostly resulted in disappointment. In a business as tough as ours, the direction to follow is, to me, obvious. ▲

Tom Fricke is a St. Louis-based attorney who specializes in legal issues relating to the amusement game business. He serves as chairman of the IAFEC government relations committee. He can be reached at (314)361-6672.

The 45 is still turning

As the recording industry continues to develop new formats on which to release its product, jukeboxes continue to accommodate those changes. Nevertheless, some of the older technology continues to endure, and for good reason.

Jim McCormick

The jukebox is a machine that plays musical selections of the customer's choice. It always has and always will. And it's been that way since the first jukebox, a converted 1889 Edison Phonograph equipped with four listening tubes and four coin slots. Over the years, jukeboxes, made in many shapes, sizes, and styles have played 7-, 10-, and 12-inch records that ranged from 16, 33, 45, and 78 rpm. Some even played tapes, while many modern jukeboxes now play CD's.

The word "Jukebox" comes from "Jook", a slang word, thought to be of African origin, meaning dancing or partying. And whether we are listening to 45 rpm records or digitally transmitted bits of information that are played by computers as music, it is unlikely that listeners are going to cease dancing and partying, or listening to jukeboxes for that matter, anytime soon.

Even after over 40 years, the 45-rpm jukebox, introduced in the late '50s to replace 78-rpm jukeboxes, is thriving. Surprisingly, the number of 45 rpm jukeboxes currently in operation throughout the United States is thought by some people to exceed the number of CD jukeboxes in operation by one-and-a-half times, according to Scott Schlinkert, general manager of Dolphin Music Distributors. "But there is no way to verify whether or not that's true because there's no standard registration of jukebox locations," Schlinkert said.

Operators still place 45s in many major chain stores and restaurants. "Our 45 rpm players are in locations whose earnings won't rise above a certain level," said Jim Hayes, president of Gem Music and Vending. "In such places the CD won't make a difference. Those locations still want six or seven songs for a dollar, which is not profitable for a CD jukebox operator." And in those locations patrons won't likely pay a higher rate to hear music, but they do want to hear music. So it makes good sense for an operator to place 45 rpm jukeboxes there.

According to Hayes, Gem's jukebox route is 80 percent, and possibly over 90 percent, CD jukebox. But he admits that there are places the 45 still out-performs the CD. "In certain rural areas, 45s are prevalent because of the popularity of country music and because beers and things are cheaper," Hayes said. In fact, the country music classic, Patsy Cline's "Crazy," was again the Number One song on the 1996 update of the "Top 40 Jukebox Singles of All Time" compiled by the Amusement & Music Operators Association. "Country music continues to be popular on 45. I think the Country and Western divisions at the major labels understand the importance of the jukebox to marketing new country artists," Schlinkert told *Play Meter.*

Another benefit of 45s over CDs is the cost to operators: $1 for a 45 compared to $11 for one CD. There is a definite need to have 45 rpm jukeboxes in locations that can't generate the income that a CD box warrants. "The 45 box is cheaper to operate, therefore it's put in locations that don't have enough money coming in to justify placing a CD box there," said Schlinkert. "Usually operators put them in high crime and theft areas because they're easier to maintain, repair, and replace."

But even with these lasting advantages to the 45 rpm jukebox, new obstacles to its endurance and profitability continue to arise. "The reason you would like 45 boxes over CDs is that there are a lot more locations you can serve because your costs are lower, and there is still good sound quality in the 45," said John

Estridge, vice president of operations at Southern Games. "However, you can't get all the top hits."

Record companies still manufacture 45s, but the production schedule is partial and erratic. "I was once very behind the 45 record, back when we didn't have any CDs," Doc Ringo, of Wallace Distribution Co., told *Play Meter*. "We had heard they were going to discontinue the 45s when they took them off the retail shelves. Now, it depends on what mood they're in when they get out of bed in the morning as to whether or not record companies are going to make 45s of a certain song."

"The problem is that the record labels have decided to stop releasing new songs on 45s, to the extent that 45 releases are down 50 percent from five years ago, particularly in pop, rock and R&B," Schlinkert said.

"The 45 jukebox is hanging on because of some economic reasons and maybe for sentimental reasons."

Other problems exist for operators of 45 jukeboxes, including maintenance, restoration, skipping, and rotation speed fluctuations. The 45-rpm records have to play at 45 revolutions per minute, or at least close to it, and a record's sound is annoying if its speed is incorrect. (These fluctuations can be detected by listening carefully to known records or by using a "strobe" disc.) However, CDs have their own drawbacks. They skip, and there is a host of other problems that helps to strengthen the arguments supporting the emergence of digital jukeboxes.

For Ringo, there is no question that the CD jukebox has become more readily available at a more reasonable price and that the difference in quality between 45s and CDs is worth the difference in price between the two. "Plus, you don't have to fight the battle of whether or not you can get certain songs," Ringo said. "The 45 jukebox is hanging on because of some economic reasons and maybe for sentimental reasons. [Wallace Distribution] chose to change them out for CDs because CD jukeboxes ultimately earn more money. You can justify an increase in the price of play, and our return on investment is greater now than ever before. Generally, all the good locations have been changed over. Just the very marginal locations are left with 45s." ▲

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COMPANY
PROFILE

Venture builds on HISTORY AND SERVICE

New management, seasoned staff, improved product, and the legendary Sol Lipkin equal a solid formula for success.

Sol Lipkin (c) takes his hat off to Russell McKay (l) and Bob Chapman (r) at the front of the new Hillside, N.J., office of Venture Entertainment Products Co.

Leo Selter has 40 years of experience in shuffleboard design and production.

Erica Estrada handles customer service.

Qustandi Saman has 17 years of experience in pool table and shuffleboard manufacturing.

The name of Sol Lipkin is forever linked to the sport of shuffleboard, and rightly so. Now Lipkin is director of sales at Venture Entertainment Products, a new name in coin-op circles that is backed by a knowledgeable staff dedicated to enlarging the field of street-ready products such as pool tables and shuffleboards.

Venture exhibited at AMOA International Expo '98 last month and at the Billiard Congress of America trade show in June. The product line includes *The Maverick* and *The Knight* pool tables, as well as a shuffleboard line with the enviable pedigree of American Shuffleboard.

Venture acquired certain assets of American International Shuffleboard Co. from its bank earlier this year. The principals are Bob Chapman, a 15-year industry veteran, and Russell McKay, a manufacturer with 30 years of experience. Chapman is sales manager of Venture; McKay is president.

The high-quality standards set forth by American over the years will be maintained and improved with such additions as a new electronic scoreboard and a new cabinet design for the shuffleboards.

Chapman and the able factory staff are also redesigning the bumper pool table, and have added an optional bill acceptor pool table to the line. Venture will be the first manufacturer to also put a dollar bill acceptor on a shuffleboard and offer an optional ticket dispenser.

To achieve its goals, Venture has moved into a 17,500-square-foot production facility in Hillside, N.J., and kept the experienced staff of Leo Selter, who has 40 years of shuffleboard design and production experience, and Qustandi Saman, a skilled craftsman with 17 years in pool table and shuffleboard manufacturing. Additional factory personnel have a combined 60 years of experience in the business.

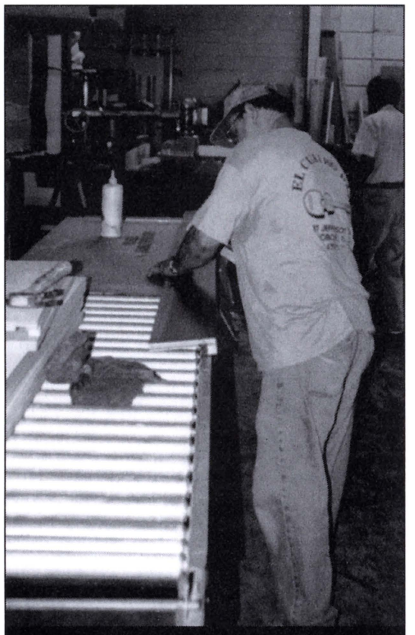
Leading the way, however, is Lipkin, the Bob Hope of the coin-op world. The energetic Lipkin, who has been in the amusement business since 1934 and looks decades younger than his 92 years, is brimming with ideas to take shuffleboards into the next century.

Lipkin comments, "I'm back in full force working with Bob and Russell. We are a well-knit, well-organized group and will be an asset to the industry."

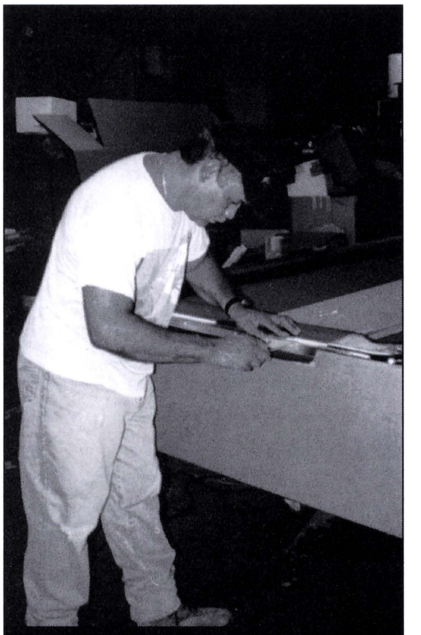
He sees a resurgence in shuffleboards: "I think there will be steady sales. Our program is solid. We will ship quality product and take care of our customers as they were taken care of years ago."

"Shuffleboards bring in couples," remarked Lipkin. "It keeps them in the location, and they play in leagues and play other coin-op games."

Speaking of leagues and tournaments, Lipkin mentioned that one of the biggest national events for shuffleboard takes place Nov. 1 in Reno, Nev., hosted by the Shuffleboard Federation. The prize purse will total $200,000. Players are expected to come from all over the country including Alaska. He noted that the women players were

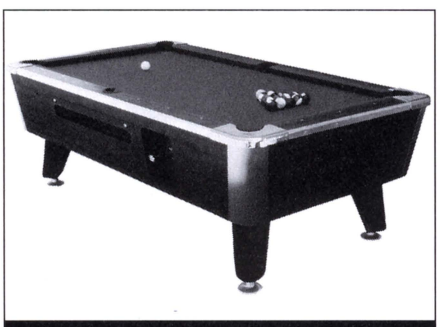


Antonio Vera has worked in the shop for over 20 years.



Willie Jullermo Martdinez, a 25-year employee, checks pool table trim.

Carlos Martdinez does precision drilling.



The Maverick pool table.

Walter Ruiz has over 10 years in production.

nothing short of "fantastic."

He turned nostalgic for a moment, recalling the first coin-op shuffleboard in 1946. "Many of the large distributors today started with music and coin-op shuffleboards," said Lipkin. "The demand was so great that hundreds of shuffleboards were being shipped coast-to-coast every week by numerous manufacturers, but American was recognized as the leader."

In recent years Lipkin has developed a relationship with Dave & Buster's; he is a special consultant and spokesperson for the restaurant and entertainment chain's shuffleboard operations. Lipkin appears at every new store opening to work with Dave & Buster's captains and coach them on shuffleboards and how to interact with the customers. His photo is even on the menu. A special *Sol Lipkin Grand Deluxe* shuffleboard model has been produced, patterned on a table from the 1940s.

"Having Sol is like wearing a tux," said Chapman. "He brings something special; he's an industry icon." Also special are the plans that Venture has for the future. Chapman added, "We've designed a new shuffleboard scoreboard with an attract mode. We're keeping up with the pace of what other games are earning."

While Venture's expertise is in pool tables, the company sees a good future for shuffleboards and allied products. Six-foot and eight-foot hockey tables are also in the company's lineup, and a *Rocket Hockey Air* is on the drawing board, according to Chapman.

"Shuffleboard is more specialized than pool tables," he said. "The finish on the top is the key; it's critical to game play. Our production personnel are very skilled. Our home recreational line features the American Eagle shuffleboard models in nine-foot, 12-foot, and 14-foot sizes."

Chapman added that Lipkin's association with Dave & Buster's is good for the industry and shuffleboards. For Lipkin, being both director of sales for Venture and good will ambassador for shuffleboards are jobs he welcomes. He's happy to be back in the swing with new product to represent.

Venture Entertainment Products Co. is located at 6 Evans Terminal Road, Hillside, NJ 07205; (800)461-2525 or (732)341-2524; fax (732)914-9166. Lipkin can be reached at (800)819-2434. ▲

Trade mission visits VIETNAM

AAMA's Bob Fay met one-on-one with Nguyen Ban Chi, vice chairman of the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City.

TOP: The AAMA delegates met with American Ambassador Pete Peterson at his home in Hanoi. From left: Dave Droulliard, Gene Brogowski, Peterson, Ron Carrara, Lou Rudolph, James Griffiths, and Bob Fay.

BOTTOM: From left: Herb Cochran, director of commercial services, Bob Fay, Ron Carrara, James Griffiths, Lou Rudolph, Dave Drouillard, Gene Brogowski, and a representative from the foreign trade and investment development center.

Bob Fay, executive director of the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA), Gene Brogowski of Innovative Concepts in Entertainment, Ron Carrara of Lazer-Tron, Dave Drouillard of NSM, James Griffiths of Valley Recreation, and Lou Rudolph of Merit, recently traveled to Vietnam on a week-long trade mission. The industry representatives agreed that the trade mission to this country was a mission accomplished. There have been other trade missions to South America, Southeast Asia, China, and India.

Throughout the course of the mission, which comprised of stops in both Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, the industry contingent participated in over two dozen meetings and briefing sessions with a variety of people. These included Vietnamese government officials, high-profile corporate executives, and other potential business prospects. Rudolph noted, "We had high level meetings with almost all of the important ministries in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City as well as meeting with the ambassador and counsel general of Vietnam. There are probably over 5,000 American business people working in Vietnam. We had a big impact on the ministries we met with. There is a large potential for American coin-op in Vietnam."

Of the association's first venture into this market, Fay said, "We are pleased to have had the opportunity to meet with the movers and shakers of this country to seek out new business opportunities for AAMA members as well as for the coin-op industry as a whole."

Foreign business development committee co-chairman Ron Carrara concurred with Fay's assessment, and added, "It was very exciting to see all of the potential that there is for our product in Vietnam. This mission can be considered a success already, due to the contacts made. It will be very interesting to see what will be done to cultivate the business relationships which were established during our week in Vietnam."

Rudolph added, "There is a strong community in Hanoi doing business on all sorts of levels from major construction projects at the Hanoi Airport to companies like Pepsi, Coca-Cola, and Maybelline advertising and marketing. Vietnamese, considering the past history, are incredibly open to American business people and Western styles of doing bsuiness. There was a strong entrepreneurial spirit there (and they have made a nice merge between capitalism and communism that really works for them)." ▲

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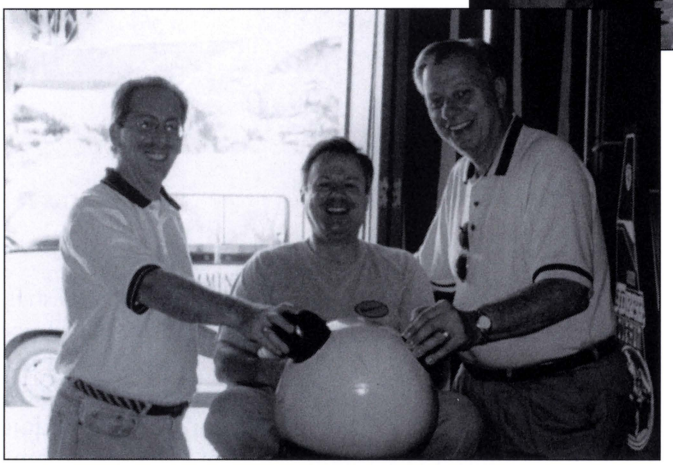
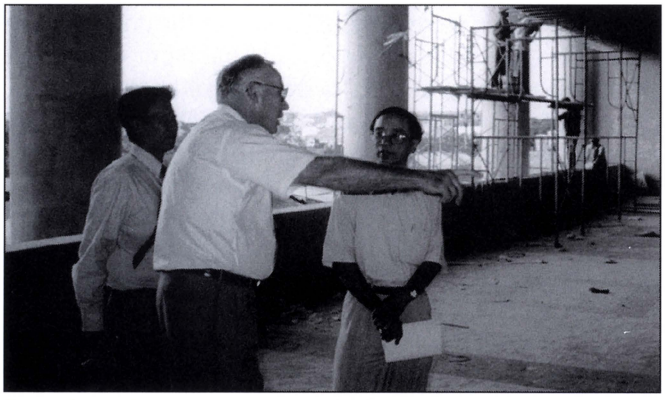
Bob Fay accepts a gift from Dr. Luu Minh Tri, vice chairman of the People's Committee of Hanoi.



Merit's Lou Rudolph (l) and Lazer-Tron's Ron Carrara (r) with Bill Yarmy, senior marketing officer of the Commercial Service in Ho Chi Minh City.

The delegates visited a number of arcades in Vietnam. This one is Fun-World in Vung Tau.

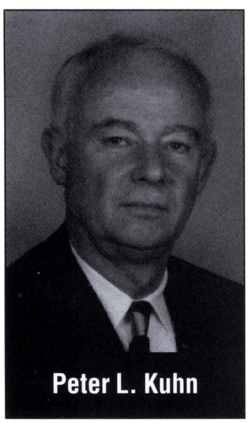


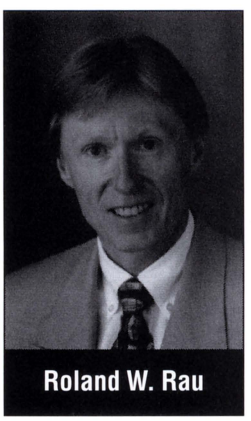
Fay—along with his interpreter—presents pointers for game room development to Tran Viet Hong at the National Cinema Center project.

Bob Fay explains AAMA's mission to members of the American Chamber of Commerce in Ho Chi Minh City.

CONSULTING FIRM FORMED FOR EUROPEAN MARKET

Peter L. Kuhn has developed a new consulting firm for amusement business industry members who are considering entering the European market. Kuhn was the marketing and sales director of NSM Germany from 1986 to 1996. His new firm, Kuhn, Rau & Associates, Amusement, Vending and Gaming Consultants, was founded because throughout their careers Kuhn and his associates have witnessed companies from outside of Europe attempt to enter the market with less than full success. Such shortfalls were often the result of a lack of appropriate strategy or of key contracts.


Peter L. Kuhn


Roland W. Rau

KR&A purports to be capable of performing those tasks necessary for successful entry into the European market or for the enhancement of a current European effort, including but not limited to product evaluation and market research, constructing market strategies, assisting in establishing a subsidiary or acquiring a company, recruitment, launching products, and developing appropriate advertising approaches and materials.

"Our experience, depth of knowledge, and breadth of contacts within the European coin-operated industry are, we believe, without equal. Together we have more than 40 years of experience in the international coin-op business," Kuhn said. Kuhn, Rau & Associates can be reached at +49-611-309195 or by e-mail (peter.l.kuhn@t-online.de).

ATEI INCREASES HOTEL CHOICES

In preparation for the 1999 Amusement Trade Exhibition International (ATEI) being held at London's Earls Court Exhibition Centre Jan. 26, 27, and 28, ATEI organizers are recommending 27 hotels, an increase of 59 percent over last year's recommendation of 17. The ATEI hotel arrangement provides visitors to the London shows with guaranteed quality central-London accommodations at specially negotiated rates up to 50 percent below normal prices.

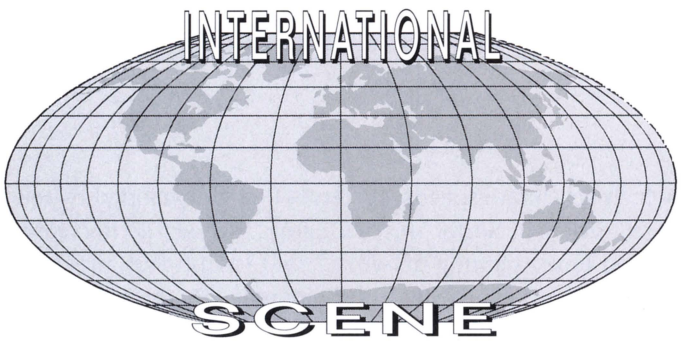
"Despite having secured 7,000 room nights in 1998, all of our hotels were fully booked months ahead of the exhibition," ATEI's special events manager Samantha Byrne, who is responsible for securing all of the participating hotels, said. "In response to this demand, we've increased the number of hotels and the volume of available room nights to 9,000."

As part of its ongoing assessment of hotels, ATEI will relocate its official headquarters to the Five Star Royal Garden, a 400-room hotel situated on Kennsington High Street overlooking Hyde Park which served as the headquarters for the 1996 European Soccer Championships.

In related news, the Earls Court Exhibition Centre, the venue for London's ATEI, is set to benefit from a planned U.S. $48 million investment to be phased in over the next five years.

A minimum of U.S. $24 million has already been allocated for the project, with the full size of the investment to be ratified at October's board meeting. Major issues under consideration include the installation of comfort-cooling throughout Earls Court 1 and 2, upgrading of staircases and elevators, replacement of escalators, refurbishment of toilets, and upgrading the 10 catering areas in Earls Court 1. These issues alone are expected to require an estimated U.S. $25.6 million.

Ongoing developments, which will be completed by the time Earls Court opens its doors to the international amusements industry in January 1999, include improvements to the goods elevators to level 2, the introduction of a deluxe "Delice de France" branded patisserie facility, and the refurbishment of kitchens serving the Thames Room. The to-



tal cost of these works is $800,000.

Outside of this program, work has started on a major project that will make travelling to ATEI even easier in the future. A new railway station is under construction to serve the Earls Court Exhibition Centre. The new station, due for completion by spring 1999, will provide service for visitors making journeys within London, as well as providing direct links with population centers to the north of the capital and London-Gatwick airport in the South.

Commenting on the developments taking place at what is Europe's largest covered single hall auditorium, ATEI chief executive Peter Rusbridge said, "We represent vigorously the views and interests of our customers in all of our meetings with Earls Court management. The relationship we have with Earls Court is a progressive one, and I am very encouraged by the exciting plans which exist for the exhibition hall and the transport infrastructure." For more information on ATEI, call +44 (0) 171 713 0302.

THOMSON INTRODUCES DPS RIDE FILMS

Thomson Entertainment has announced its totally flexible simulation ride film rental periods starting soon. In addition, during late 1998, Thomson Entertainment will introduce its new MPEG II encoded Digital Picture System (DPS) which will enable simulator operators to order and renew ride films by credit card using telephone, fax, or e-mail.

DPS ride films will be supplied on a CD-ROM with a security code unique to a specified simulator that the operator has to key in to activate the ride. Once installed, the film runs directly from the computer hard disk. A useful feature of the system, particularly for operators who move their equipment from location to location, is the inclusion of ride intros and outros in up to 20 different languages.

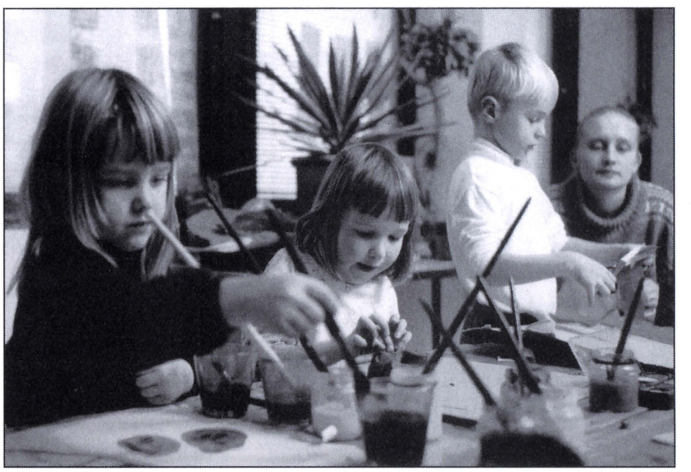
"When the agreed rental period is nearing an end, the system will remind the operator that he needs to renew the license," Bernard said. For more information, call Thomson, +44 (0) 1293 563533.

CAMBER'S MORPHIS SIMULATOR USED AS PROMO TOOL

SONY PlayStation has selected Camber Entertainment's futuristic Morphis capsule simulator for a sales promotion campaign in the United Kingdom and Europe. A specially built mobile Morphis MovieRide will be used and transported by a tractor/trailer unit branded with PlayStation graphics and stylings.

Brainwave, an independent video and event production company, developed a ride-film using computer animation of real game footage from the latest PlayStation games. Camber experts then programmed the motion of the simulator to match the film. S&D Leisure will own and operate the simulator throughout the promotion campaign.

Camber Entertainment has developed a whole range of new simulation products, including a soon-to-be-launched six- to eight-seat MovieRide theatre and has reportedly won orders in excess of U.S. $10 million. Fore more information, contact Camber Entertainment, +44 (0) 1293 427920; fax +44 (0) 1293 427925.



RAY CELEBRATES 60TH ANNIVERSARY

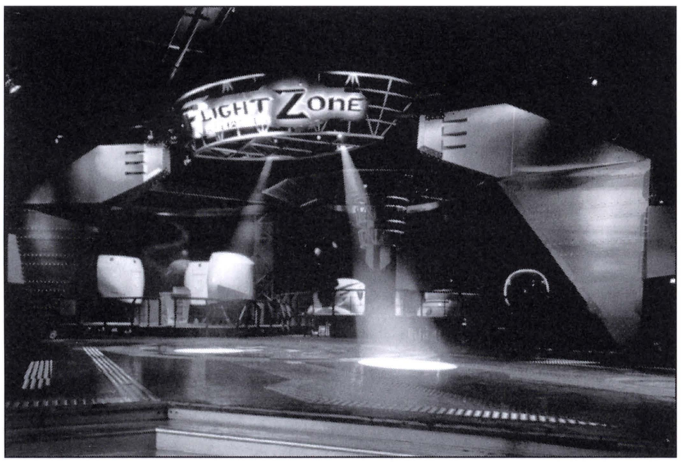
RAY, Finland's Slot Machine Association and owner of amusement machine and jukebox corporation Pelika RAY Oy, celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. Since its inception in 1938, RAY has used its revenue from gaming activities to support the work of Finnish health and welfare organizations.

SEGA TO SHIP NEW GAME PLATFORM

Sega Enterprises Ltd., Tokyo, revealed its new home video game platform "Dreamcast" on May 21. It will be launched Nov. 20, 1998, in Japan and in the fall of 1999 in North America. The new platform's development has been based on three concepts: highest audio-visual expressing power; adaptability to any development environment; and new types of play possible.

"Expanding dreams in the world by going beyond the framework of conventional home video game play, 'Dreamcast' is a new format of digital entertainment," Shoichiro Irimajiri, president of Sega, told Game Machine magazine.

"Dreamcast" realizes computer graphic (CG) expressions wider than those provided by an ordinary personal computer. Although the coin-op CG system board ("Naomi" in code name) utilizing the main board of Sega "Dreamcast" is still under development, it has not yet been announced.



Space Port 9's Flight Zone offers simulators galore.

SPACE PORT 9 OPENS IN TAIWAN

Virtual City Entertainment has opened Space Port 9 in Kenting, Taiwan. The 120,000 square-foot indoor entertainment center is located on the southern tip of Taiwan and houses 21 motion simulators, dozens of other virtual reality and adventure games, and boasts futuristic decor. Plans call for the simulators to be linked with future entertainment centers built by Virtual City so that players may fight against or team up with players from other sites in countrywide competitions.

Overlooking the Pacific Ocean, Space Port 9 bills itself as an "outpost for fun-starved people to test their combat skills, develop their athletic abilities, and prepare themselves for adventure." The "Captain Deka Journey" begins as you pass through the Spacegate and enter the Central Territory, the crux of Space Port 9, which boasts 30-foot high ceilings. A laser light show describes the Earth's plight and your mission to save the planet. The arches leading from the Central Territory to the individual entertainment zone are filled with futuristic steelwork, lights, and music. Visitors are then asked to choose their path and enter one of the four realms of training and entertainment (Adventure Zone, Sports Zone, Flight Zone, and Motion Zone), each filled with simulators and games dictated by the zone's theme.

Space Port 9 also offers dining and snack opportunities at the Out of Blue Cafe, the Energizer Snack Bar, and the Space Pub. Visitors can browse the Gift Deck for the latest Space Port 9 fashions.

"The convergence of telephone and television systems which accelerate speeds, currently being developed by telecom leaders in North America, allows Virtual City to create a linked home gaming network," said Joseph Pan, president and CEO of Virtual City Entertainment. "By the year 2000, players will be able to dial up to Virtual City's Web site from home and compete against players using motion simulators at the Space Port sites.

Following the opening of the flagship site in the resort town of Kenting, Virtual City Entertainment will open three more sites planned over the next two years in Taoyuan, Neihu, and Taichung. There will also be another 15 to 20 Space Ports located in other areas of Taiwan and Southeast Asia over the next five years.

Space Port is open from 9 a.m. until 2 a.m. daily. Prices are adults 650 NTD ($19 USD), students 550 NTD ($16 USD), and seniors and physically challenged 300 NTD ($9 USD). Contact Virtual City at 886-2-2718-7766; fax 886-2-2718-8266; or Web site (www.virtualcity.com.tw).

TAMA/GTI EXPO STRIVES TO BE ALL-IN-ONE TAIWAN SHOW

The Taiwan Amusement Machine Association/Game Time International Expo '98 took place Aug. 14-17 at the Taipei World Trade Center in Taipei, Taiwan. This year's show was Taiwan's first and only amusement trade show in 1998. The TAMA/GTI Expo is now the largest amusement trade show in Taiwan.

The first two days were open only to tradespeople in order to provide time and space for talking business. The last two days were open to the general public through the purchase of admission tickets. The numbers of domestic professional and general public guests reached 5,139 and 6,962 respectively. More than 300 international visitors came from 42 different countries, including Russia, Austria, Italy, United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Israel, United States, Argentina, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, India, United Arab Emirates, Tunisia, and Australia, totaling about 12,000 visitors in all.

TAMA's chairman, Kun-mou Lu, in his opening address, stated, "TAMA has been making an effort to consolidate all of the different amusement trade shows in Taiwan and hopes to organize a professional, all-in-one show this year through the cooperation of all the amusement industry associations in Taiwan."

TAMA/GTI Expo featured the introduction of a variety of amusement products, including both local- and foreign-made items. Such items included Shyh Ywan Enterprise's Soccer 2001, IGS' The Killing Blade and its new Speed Driver simulator, Flying Star's KuKu Chicken, pinball bingo machines from Gang Yi and Shen Yang Electronics, Hiphopmania from Saint Fun International, assorted adult games, motion simulators, and amusement parts and accessories.

VIVID GROUP DEBUTS *SOCCER ZERO-G*

Vivid Group of Toronto, Canada, puts a new twist on sports video games with its new *Soccer Zero-G*, which builds on the success of the company's video gesture-controlled virtual reality technology.

Soccer Zero-G allows up to six players to appear and compete head-to-head inside the game. *Soccer Zero-G* follows a team format with two teams of two to three players who stand in front of a video camera and giant video screen. Players appear in real-time on the same virtual playing field. They move around the field by simply leaning in the direction they wish to travel. Their interactive video touch lets them propel the virtual ball toward the net.

Said Vivid Group president Vincent John Vincent, "This game captures all the fun and excitement of competitive team sports without the need for a large playing field. Players use their whole bodies to maneuver up and down the virtual field but never move from their spot in front of the video camera."

The first *Soccer Zero-G* is being installed at the Rueben Fleet Science Center. For more information, contact Vivid Group, (416) 340-9290, ext. 225; fax (416) 348-9809; or Web site (www.vividgroup.com).

DAVE & BUSTER'S DONATES FUNDS TO BRISTOL ZOO GARDENS

Dave & Buster's hosted a premiere party on July 28 to celebrate its arrival at Cribb's Causeway, near Bristol. The Dallas-based duo behind the restaurant and entertainment concept, Dave Corriveau and Buster Corley, were joined by guests from the region and beyond, including TV celebrities Michaela Strachan and Chris Packham, to celebrate the creation of this new location. All money raised from the VIP bash was donated to Bristol Zoo Gardens and the planned creation of a new Conservation Education Center.

Dave & Buster's covers 45,000 square feet and includes two bars, a dining room, two private/corporate function rooms, and an array of state-of-the-art electronic interactive entertainment with which you can have a go at everything from jet-ski riding to white water rafting to Daytona motor racing. Visitors can play a round of golf on the full-swing golf simulator or play billiards or shuffleboard. Guests can also choose to dine at the Grand Dining Room or relax and eat at the Midway Bar.

From left: Dave Corriveau, Richard Cave (managing director of Bass Leisure Entertainments), Geoffrey Greed (director of Bristol Zoo Gardens), and Buster Corley celebrate the opening of Dave & Buster's in Bristol, England.

"Dave & Buster's is about having fun the American way," said Gary Squires, operations director at Bass Leisure Entertainments, which holds the exclusive license agreement for Dave & Buster's in the United Kingdom. "We believe it's an exciting concept that is ideally situated in Bristol--a vibrant city with a fast developing leisure and entertainment scene!"

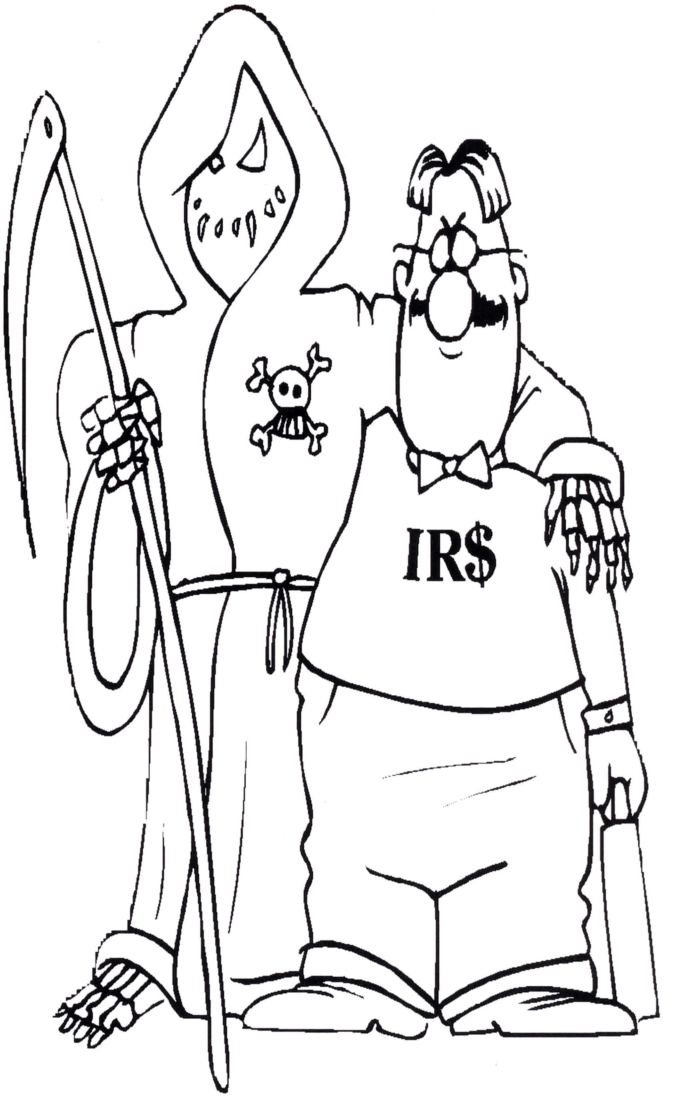
Dave & Buster's opening hours are 12 p.m. to 1 a.m., Mon. to Thu., 12 p.m. to 2 a.m. Fri. to Sat., and 12 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. on Sun. Dave and Buster's has a minimum age of 21 after 10 p.m. For more information, call (0117) 9500515.

This cabinet was designed and built specifically for the *MegaTouch*.

MEGATOUCH WOWS HONG KONG

Merit's Lou Rudolph, on his way to Vietnam for the AAMA-sponsored Trade Mission, stopped first in Hong Kong to visit customer Jubilant Success. The company has been buying *MegaTouch* kits and installing them in custom cabinets with either a 19- or 29-inch monitor. One cabinet was built specifically for *MegaTouch* and the other was the Astro cabinet by Sega which has been adapted for the game. Lou said the game is so popular in Hong Kong that "any arcade you step into will have no fewer than eight *MegaTouch* machines." ▲

TAX TIPS



Old-time tax religion yields to

NEW-TIME TAX RELIGION

If you are a tax sinner, please step forward. Today's sermon at the First Anti-Tax Church is titled, "How you can enrich the IRS when transferring your business." Strange title? Not really. It's the conventional wisdom or what our preacher calls, "The old-time tax religion."

This is a true story of good against evil taken straight from the pages of the ever-growing tax business bible. If you're a business owner with two or more children—some active in your business and some not—listen up.

A business owner (Joe, age 68) from Alabama told me how three employees (ages 38, 45, and 52) had helped build his business (Success Co.) over the years. Profits were plowed back into the business. Today the business is worth $10 million, with 80 percent owned by Joe and 20 percent owned by the employees. Joe and his wife Mary have three children, none active (nor likely to be) in the business.

Joe's goals are simple: after he passes on, the business should go to the three employees; his three children should get the value ($8 million) of Joe's share of the business. What's the conventional wisdom? Have Success Co. own life insurance (the actual amount of insurance is now $11 million; the extra $3 million allows for growth) on Joe's life. The insurance funds a buy/sell agreement. After Joe dies, Success Co. will buy Joe's stock. Then employees will own 100 percent of the business. (Good! That's what Joe wants.) The kids will get the $8 million or more. (And that's also what Joe wants.) Perfect? Joe's lawyer, accountant, and insurance consultant assured Joe that this is the conventional wisdom. The "best" way to go.

What's wrong with this picture? Each dollar of those insurance proceeds used to buy Joe's stock will be divided two ways: 55 cents to the IRS; 45 cents to the kids. Unwittingly, the IRS, not Joe's family, will benefit the most from Joe's business, which took him a lifetime to build.

What to do? The solution may vary with your particular situation (for example, How many kids do you have in the business? How many are non-business children? What is your age? Your wife's age? What is the value of your business? The value of your other assets?) But there's a plan to beat the pants off the conventional wisdom and the IRS—all legally.

STEP #1: *Get the insurance out of the corporation into Joe's name and then into an irrevocable life insurance trust. (Now the proceeds will be free of the estate tax).*

STEP #2: *Recapitalize Success Co. so Joe can keep voting control (a tax-free transaction) for as long as he lives. Have Joe and Mary create two or more grantor retained annuity trusts (GRATs) to knock the gift tax value below $1.25 million (the tax-free amount for a married couple in 1998).*

STEP #3: *Create an annual stock-bonus/stock-gift program. Success Co. should give stock bonuses to the employees. (In a more typical example, the employees would be Joe's children.) Joe should make annual gifts of Success Co. stock to his children and grandchildren.*

This sermon does not attempt to cover all the details of the plan outlined above. Find a professional who knows how to use this structure to craft a transfer plan that transfers most (in many cases all) of your wealth free of the estate tax. More importantly, your estate tax liability (whatever the amount) will be transferred, in effect, to the insurance carrier. When all the smoke clears, your estate tax will be either zero or paid 100 percent by tax-free insurance proceeds. It's time for you and your professionals to get that new-time tax religion.

Congress changes gift tax rules

Applause! Congress finally buried an old and onerous gift tax killer rule. First some background. Gifts to your spouse are sheltered by an unlimited marital deduction, and the first $10,000 of gifts made to other individuals is also exempt from tax.

A gift tax return is generally not required for gifts qualifying for the marital deduction. On the other hand, a gift tax return generally must be filed for all gifts in excess of $10,000 per donee (the person receiving the gift) per year.

Just like your income tax return, your gift tax return is due on April 15. For example, taxable gifts made in 1997 should have been reported on a gift tax return filed April 15, 1998. The IRS has three years from the date a gift tax return is filed to make a gift tax assessment. So, if the IRS decides four years down the road that a gift was worth more than the value shown on your gift tax return, it's out of luck. It cannot assess any additional tax on the gift.

But in the past there was a catch. The estate and gift taxes are unified so that a single graduated rate schedule applies to cumulative lifetime and death transfers. As a result, the tax on your estate depends on the amount of taxable gifts made during your life. The more taxable gifts, the higher the estate tax.

The courts have allowed the IRS to revalue gifts, even after death, in order to determine the decedent's estate tax. While it was too late to assess additional gift taxes on the gift, the revalued gift could bump the estate into a higher tax bracket. If the IRS claimed that a lifetime gift—very often the stock of a family business corporation—was seriously undervalued, the tax on the estate could skyrocket. The estate would have a tough time proving that the valuation made years earlier was and is still correct.

OK, let's hear the drum roll for the new law: For gifts made after August 5, 1997, the IRS can no longer revalue lifetime gifts for estate tax purposes. You must only jump through one hoop: report the gift on a gift tax return. The value of the gift must be shown on the return or disclosed on the return or an attachment in a manner adequate to disclose to the IRS the nature of the gift. After three years the

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IRS (and you) are bound by the values shown on the return.

Caution: The door is still open for the IRS to revalue some gifts—(1) any gift made prior to August 6, 1997; (2) a gift tax return is filed, but the gifts are not properly disclosed or reported; (3) gifts not shown on a return; and (4) no gift tax return was filed because you thought the gift was worth $10,000 or less.

What to do for absolute protection: Except for cash gifts, report all gifts—particularly gifts involving any kind of family business or partnership—on a timely filed gift tax return.

Use a corporation for more than operating your business

Many closely held business owners have investments and investment income—things like certificates of deposit, stocks, bonds, an interest in a profitable partnership, and other investments. After consulting such owners for many years, it is clear they usually have three goals concerning these types of investments: They want to save income taxes, reduce or eliminate estate taxes, and stay in control of the property for as long as they live. Naturally, they want all the income and wealth to stay in the family. Sounds impossible.

But there is a way to get the job done. Follow these three simple steps.

STEP #1: *Form a new corporation, and elect S corporation status.*

STEP #2: *Exchange the investments (say a $100,000 treasury bond) for stock in the new S corporation. This transaction is tax-free.*

STEP #3: *Over a period of time, gift portions of the S corporation stock to your children, grandchildren, or others. Gift to a maximum of 49 percent of the stock. By keeping 51 percent of the stock, you will always be in control of the S corporation. Or keep control by issuing voting stock (say 100 shares, which you keep) and non-voting stock (say 9,900 shares, which you give to the kids over time). Now, let's take a look at the tax consequences.*

Gift Tax: You can gift up to $10,000 tax free per year to each donee (the person receiving the gift). If you are married, you can double that amount to $20,000 by having your spouse consent to the gift. It is smart not to exceed the $10,000/$20,000 value per year limit. Spread your gifts out over two or more years as necessary.

Income Tax: The stockholders pay tax on their proportionate share of the income. For example, let's say the income of the corporation was $10,000 for the year and the kids owned 60 percent of the stock (all non-voting). Their share of the income would be $6,000; yours would be $4,000. This is a great way to build an education fund for the kids.

Estate Tax: The shares of stock owned by the other members of the family will not be included in your estate. The top estate tax rate is 55 percent. So you can see significant savings are easily attained.

One warning: You must operate like an S corporation. Title to the assets must be in the corporation's name. Actually issue certificates of the S corporation stock to each stockholder. Keep corporate minutes. Ask your professional advisor to make sure you follow all the necessary details. ▲

Special reports available as companion pieces to these articles can be purchased for $27 each or three for $63.

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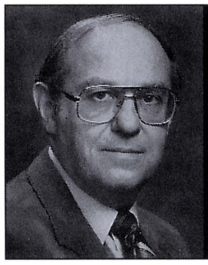
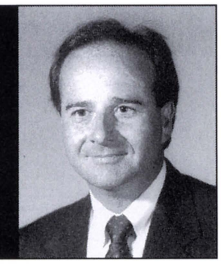


Irving Blackman and Brian Whitlock are CPAs with Blackman, Kallick, Bartelstein LLP in Chicago. Also lawyers, they specialize in business succession and wealth transfer. Both are sought-after speakers. Want to consult? Need a second opinion? Contact them at (312)207-1040; fax (312)207-1066. Their special reports are available at a nominal fee.



BRIAN WHITLOCK

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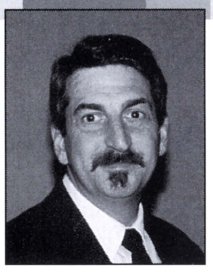


Oscilloscope waveforms in the SMPS

A Play Meter Monthly Exclusive

Last month, we took a look at oscilloscope waveforms in a linear power supply. This month, we'll take a look at the waveforms in a switched mode power supply. You'll see that there's a lot more to the SMPS than the linear supply.

Theory of operation

We've gone over this before, but it's always good to review how things work before we look at the waveforms. According to the service manual for Wells-Gardner's U2000 and U5000 monitors, the sets will function with any AC-line voltage in the range of 80VAC to 260VAC.

That's the beauty of a monitor with an SMPS. F101 allows for the interruption of the AC power in the event of a serious malfunction. Just about the only failures that are likely to blow this fuse are shorted input diodes or a shorted MOSFET (see below). C101, C102, C103, C104, and L101 provide filtering to prevent high-frequency switcher noise from being conducted back on to the AC line.

A degaussing coil is wrapped around the "bell" of the CRT in a figure 8 pattern. AC current is passed through this coil for the purpose of neutralizing residual magnetic fields in and around the face of the CRT.

R21, which controls the degaussing current, is a dual element PTC thermistor. The first element has a low resistance and delivers surge current to the degaussing coil (through CN102) during power-up. As the temperature of this element rises, its resistance increases and the degaussing current diminishes. The second element generates additional heat in the PTC, reducing the degaussing current to a negligible amount.

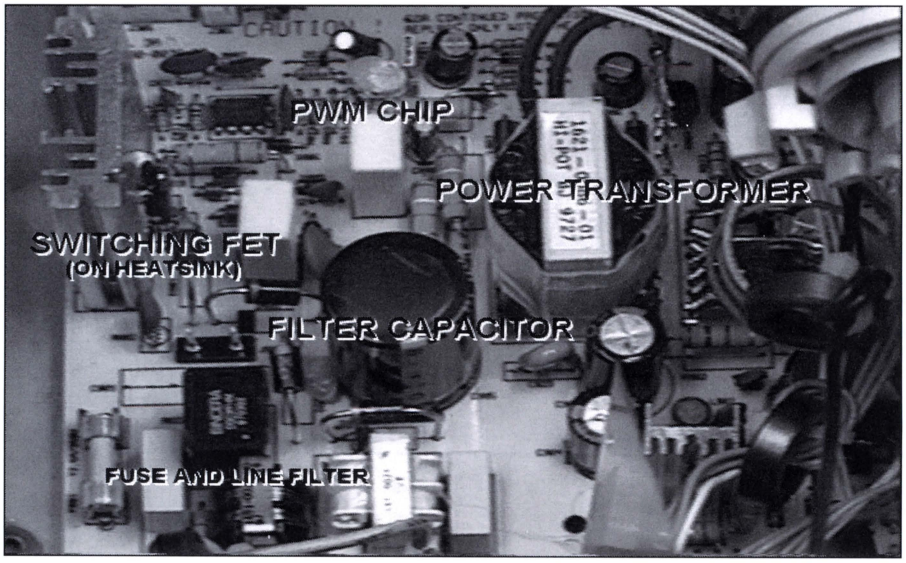
D101, D102, D103, and D104 are connected in a full-wave bridge rectifier configuration. R101 is an NTC thermistor that limits the surge current through the rectifier diodes during power-on. C105 filters the full-wave voltage into DC. So far, of course, this is exactly the same as a linear power supply. The remainder of the power supply circuitry constitutes the DC-to-DC converter. This is where we will begin our discussion of oscilloscope waveforms in this power supply.

The voltage on C105 is dropped to several volts through R102 and R103 to develop a start-up voltage at pin 7 of U101. C118 provides additional filtering. Two components, R116 and C116, are chosen to program the frequency at which the switcher will operate.

Pin 6 delivers a squarewave output signal that directly drives the power MOSFET, Q101. Q101 generates an inverted square-wave at its drain, using the voltage on C105 as a supply rail. C106, R104, and D107 act to "snub" the squarewave, preventing rise-time overshoot from reaching destructive levels. When the drain of Q101 is driven low, current is drawn through the primary of T101. Power is transferred to the secondary and auxiliary windings through transformer action occurring in T101.

The secondary winding is used to generate the voltage for the output of the switcher. The output waveform passes through rectifier diodes D106A, D106B, and D106C and is filtered by C107, C115, and C119. This voltage is then used as the main B+ supply for the rest of the monitor circuitry.

Voltage regulation is facilitated through feedback. An auxiliary winding in T101 creates a waveform representative of the output waveform. This auxiliary waveform is first filtered into DC and then divided down through R110, R113, and VR101 and fed into



pin 2 of U101. As this voltage changes with load conditions, a correction voltage is developed within U101, and the duty cycle (% on-time period) of the output square wave (pin 6) is changed. This change in duty cycle changes the total power delivered to T101, ultimately correcting the transformer's output voltage. VR101 is used to manually adjust the voltage on pin 2 and is used to vary the switcher output voltage. In addition to providing a feedback voltage, the auxiliary pulse is rectified and filtered by D113 and C118 and used to provide a regulated Vcc to U101 via pin 7.

In the event of excessive current demand from the main B+ rail, the switcher is designed to shut down its output. If excessive current (over about 3A) is drawn from the main B+ rail, the switcher responds by increasing the power to the primary of T101. The current through the MOSFET is sampled and converted into voltage by R108. This voltage is fed through R117 to pin 3 of U101. C110 bypasses transient noise to ground. When the voltage at pin 3 exceeds 0.6V, U101 shuts down its output at pin 6, eliminating failure within the switcher. Periodically the switcher attempts to restart. If the fault persists, it will once again shut itself down. This condition can be heard as a faint "ticking" within the switching supply.

Start at the output

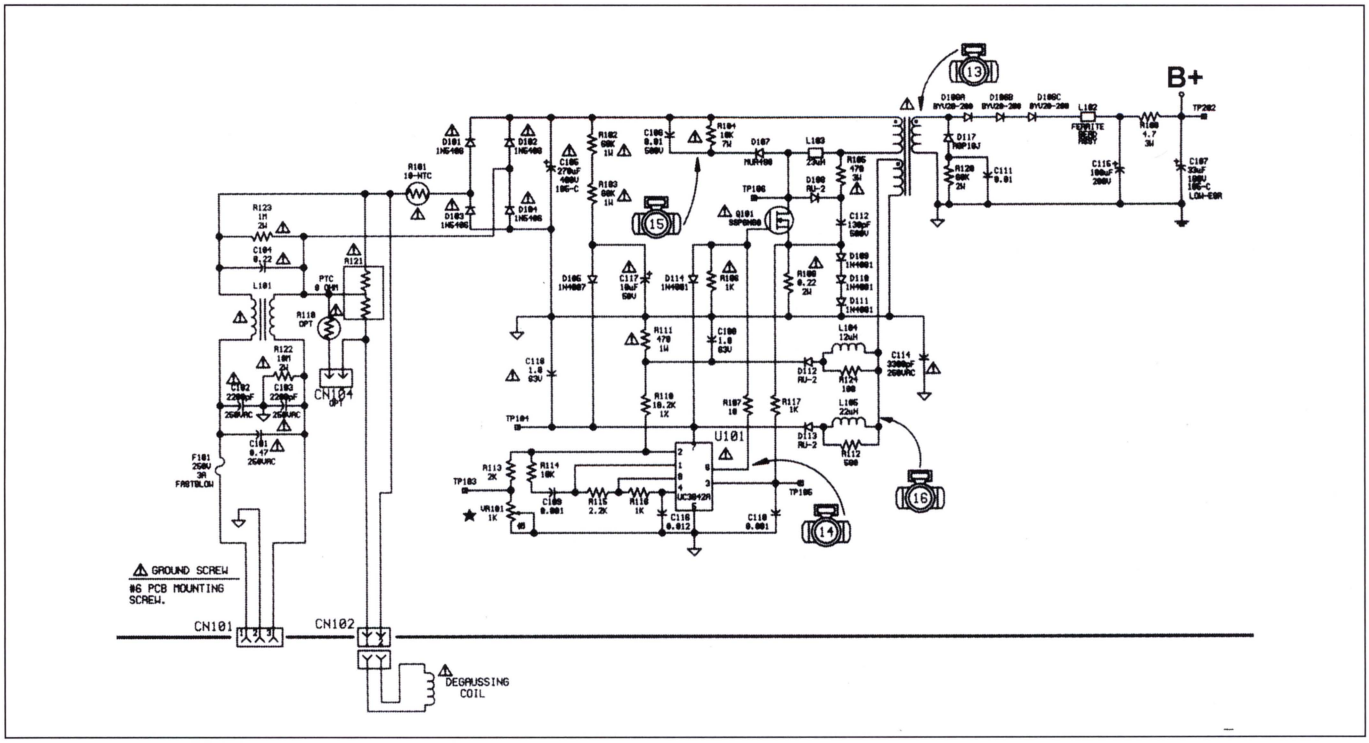
Well, almost at the output, anyway. Naturally, the B+ output of the supply is DC. Since DC is just a straight line, there's no sense taking up valuable space in the magazine to show you that again. Instead, let's look at the transformer output. It's labeled waveform 13 on the schematic diagram. (Waveform numbers 1-12 do not pertain to the power supply, so don't look for them here in this article. We will be looking at them during subsequent discussions.)

Unlike the sine wave output of a linear power supply, the transformer output of an SMPS is a square wave. Remember that this is a "switching" supply. The switching transistor that drives the transformer primary is either completely on or completely off, and the output of the transformer shows it.

Notice that the waveform isn't completely square. There is a little bit of "overshoot" and "ringing" on the output as well. This is really quite normal. It's caused by the tendency of inductance (the property of coils) and capacitance to work together to store energy and release it over time.

Although some ringing is to be expected, it is an undesirable condition, causing a waste of energy and loss of efficiency. Excessive ringing can overload components such as the switching transistor and output diodes. There is a "snubber" circuit that works to reduce the ringing. It's made from diode

"The switching transistor that drives the transformer primary is either completely on or completely off and the output of the transformer shows it."



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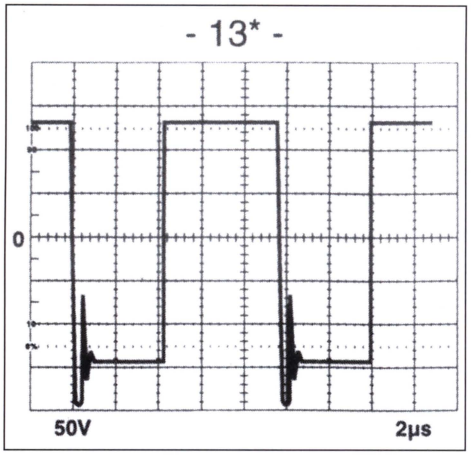
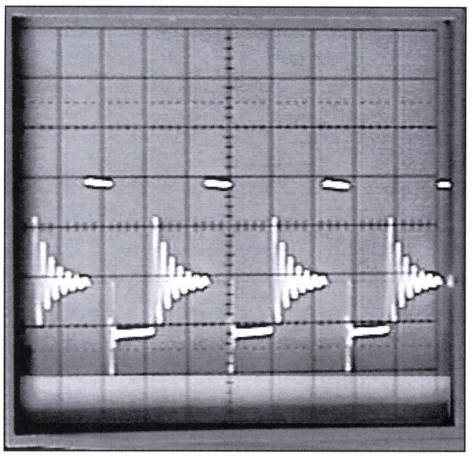
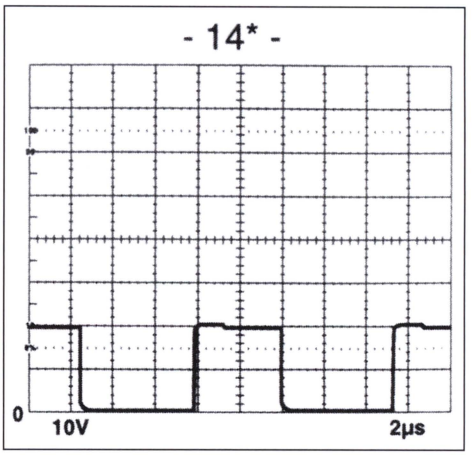
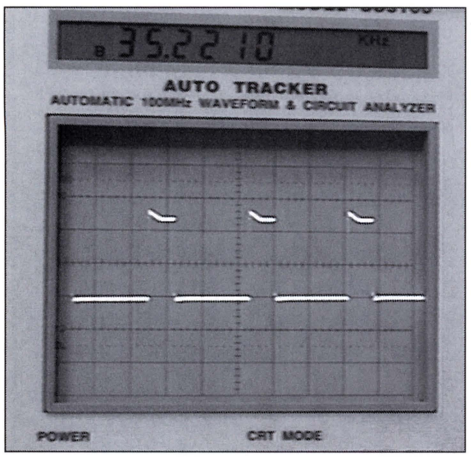
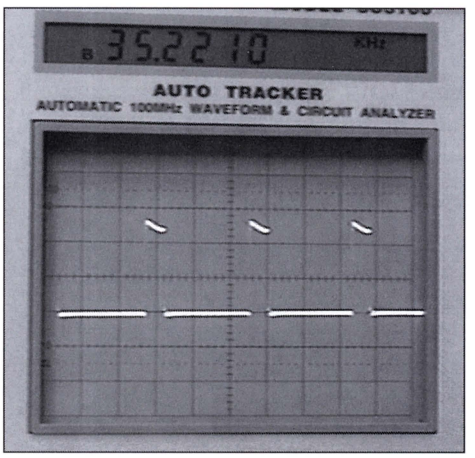
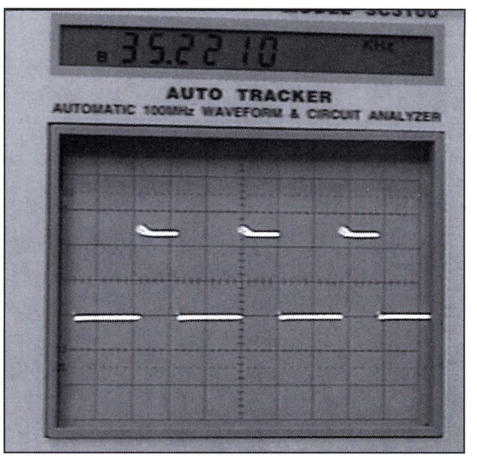












D117, resistor R128 , and capacitor C111.

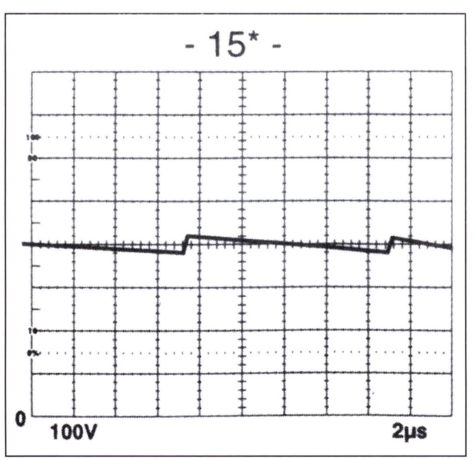
But what if you 'scoped the output of the transformer and you saw something that looked more like the waveform in figure 13a? Notice all the ringing? This is the type of thing that only an oscilloscope will point out to you. Your digital multimeter just can't see the ringing and display anything meaningful to you. In fact, the ringing might cause a DMM to register a lower DC voltage, causing you to try adjusting the B+ power supply to bring the voltage back up! Boy, would THAT be a mistake.

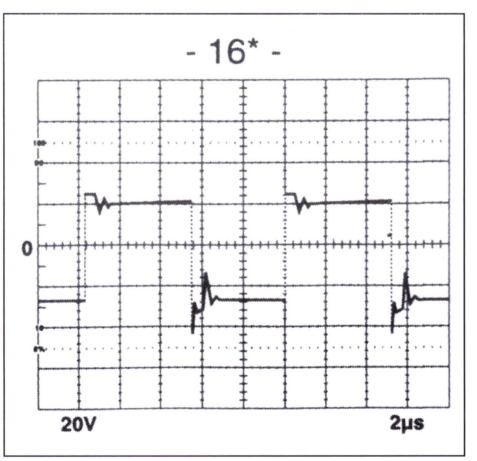
The symptom of excessive ringing might be little flecks of dark and light spots flittering all over the screen. They wouldn't be in any kind of discernible pattern because the SMPS is not synchronized to the monitor in any way. It's just happily oscillating at 35 kHz or at whatever frequency the designer wants it to.

So, what might cause the ringing? Naturally, the first thing you'd look at would be the snubber circuit. Maybe the diode is open (not too likely, by the way), or the resistor has opened. Maybe the cap is bad, or you have a broken connection somewhere. If you don't find the problem there, maybe your problem is on the input side of the transformer. Remember: garbage in, garbage out.

Waveform 16 looks a lot like waveform 13, doesn't it? It's just smaller in amplitude. Well, it should look about the same. Although this waveform appears on the left-hand side of the power transformer, it's not an input. This is the auxiliary winding mentioned earlier.

Waveform 15 gives us an idea of





what's happening on the return path of the primary winding. If this waveform showed just a straight DC voltage, it would mean that the return path was open. Either the MOSFET wasn't switching properly (not likely as they usually short-circuit when they fail) or the IC wasn't delivering the driving signal to the gate.

This driving signal can be seen in waveform 14. This is the output of the PWM IC at pin 6. Compare waveform number 14 to the same waveforms in figures 14a, 14b, and 14c. Figure 14a is the oscilloscope waveform at pin 6 when the line voltage is at 115 volts AC. Notice that the pulses seem to be a lot narrower. Now look at figure 14b. This is the same pin but with the line voltage at 130 volts AC. Notice the pulses are narrower still. Figure 14c shows the output waveform with the line voltage at just 90 volts AC. Here, the pulse width has stretched.

The point here is to illustrate two things. The first is that this is a clear demonstration of why it's called "pulse width modulation." You can clearly see how the width of the pulse is changed to compensate for changes in line voltage. Lower line voltages produce wider pulses (longer "on" time), so that the power to the transformer (hence its output voltage) remains constant. Conversely, of course, higher line voltages cause the PWM chip to produce narrower pulses. You don't have to leave the MOSFET on for as long a time if the voltage is plenty high.

The other point is that when you compare the actual waveform you see on your oscilloscope to those printed on a schematic or in a service manual, often they appear a bit different. They're quite a bit different in some cases. There are many reasons for this, not the least of which is a difference in the oscilloscopes themselves. Other differences might be due to settings, inputs, or component aging. If you are planning to get into using an oscilloscope to work on monitors (and other stuff as well), you are strongly urged to spend a great deal of time 'scoping out a working unit so that you can become familiar with what is normal. That way, when you see an unusual waveform, you'll recognize it for what it is.

Author's note: Don't forget, I have an Arcade School coming up in Chicago, Ill., Nov. 2-6. Also, I'm holding a class in Orlando, Fla., Dec. 7-11. Birmingham Vending is sponsoring this one; call (407) 425-1505 or fax (407) 425-5632. ▲

For more information, or to sponsor a class in your area, contact me at Randy Fromm's Arcade School, 1944 Falmouth Dr., El Cajon, CA 92020-2827; (619)593-6131; fax. (619)593-6132; e-mail (randy@randyfromm.com); Web site (www.randyfromm.com).

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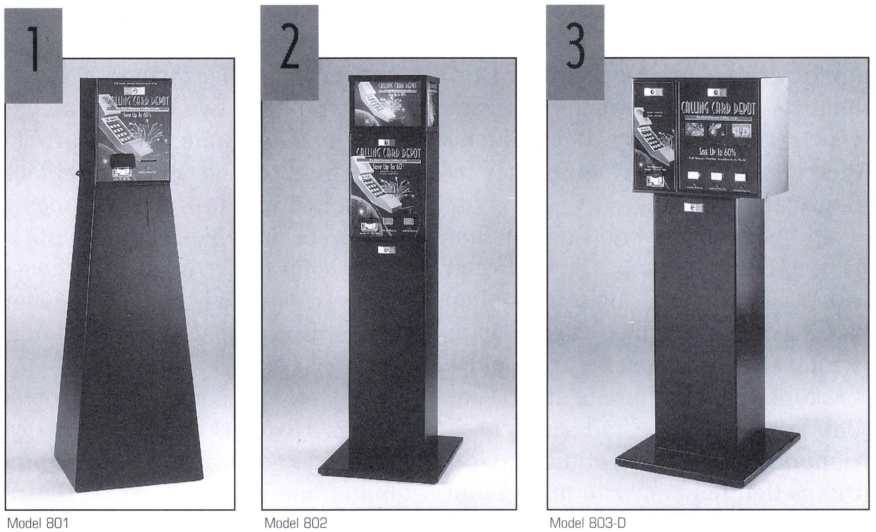

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VIC FORTENBACH

TICKET TECH

Do your games really work right?

At first glance, I'll bet you think most of your games are working. But are they? The flash of lights, the tempting sounds, or maybe some unusual mechanical action on a game is what entices customers to play games. But your customers do not see behind the scenes.

They don't see the single broken scoring switch on the 40-point hole in a *Skee-Ball* game. They're not aware that the left gator on *Wacky Gator* only bites, it doesn't score. These are little things individually, but as they build up they can change a customer's or a family's attitude toward your game center. It's these things that influence their decision about whether they will return at a later time.

But how do you know if something is wrong with a game? I'm not referring to the blatant, obvious problems as on a *Skee-Ball* when balls are in the wrong alley, or when on a two-player basketball game there is one basketball in the left lane and seven in the right one. I'm talking about the little things that happen with no warning, but they have devastating effects on the play of the game.

"These are little things individually, but as they build up they can change a customer's or a family's attitude toward your game center."

Checking all the games for proper operation can be an all day task, one that most technicians do not have the time for if they really want to do it at all. One easy way to see what is going on with your games, from a player's point of view, is to study the past week's collection sheet. In fact, look at it with your technicians. By letting them see it, they can red flag problems. Some games may require you to keep an ongoing weekly log, since some problems will not show themselves in a seven-day collection period.

If you have two of the same game side by side, game playing problems are easier to find. But several factors influence which of those games gets played. Things like whether both coin door lights are lit, how clean the game looks (sticky soda on the game?), and if the attraction lights all work (if not, replace quickly).

These are some of the obvious things to check first. OK, so your games look great to your customers, but on the collection report the game on the right is out-earning the one on the left by almost two to one. What could be the problem? This has happened to us a few times, with all different types of games. Most recently it was with a *San Francisco Rush The Rock* game.

Let me explain the situation: We have two *Rushes* linked together. The left one is close to another large driving game, while the right one is placed at the corner of a driving game island. Both games are clean, the marquee lights are lit, the seat sliders on both games work smoothly, and both games are visible and not somehow hidden.

One problem we found on the left game was that the seat, which is day-glo green plastic, was starting to crack. The crack is on the seat part and is quite visible at over 10 inches long. I ordered a new seat. I know what you're thinking, "How can a crack in the seat affect game play?" I don't know, but I do know that I would think twice about playing a game with a cracked seat, especially if there was another game right there.

Upon further investigation, I discovered that while playing the game the fourth gear was "sticky." It shifted OK, but sometimes it would drift out of fourth gear just enough to put the game into neutral. This would frustrate any game player. The shift problem was quickly fixed from parts obtained from Happ Controls.

The seat was replaced, the shifter was repaired, and now the left *Rush* game is working, but it still earns about $10 to $30 less than the right *Rush*. The reason is the placement. It is harder to get into and play than the right *Rush* game. But we can live with it.

This is an example of how the collection report is a great tip-off to game problems. It applies to both video and redemption games. An example of using the collection report for redemption is when we had a percentage problem with one of the games. Players would knock down two cats and get six tickets as soon as a coin was inserted to play the game. Needless to say, it drove the ticket percentage up to over 60 percent. We discovered the problem by using the collection report.

Using the collection report as a clue to what is wrong can be a wonderful aid to making the technician's job easier. If you have any questions or comments, I can be reached at Vicco Electronics (760) 322-4000 or by e-mail (Vic@Vicco.com). ▲

A handful of TECH TIPS

JOHNNY BOZSIK
FUN-O-RAMA

Introduction by Randy Fromm, technical editor: *The Technical Topics column for August, 1998, carried a technical tip I had received from* Play Meter *magazine reader Johnny Bozsik. It was a tip about troubleshooting the switch matrix in a Williams pinball. This month, Johnny's back with a whole slew of little tips on everything from pinball to ticket dispensers to optical guns. I happen to like Johnny's down home outlook on things and the way he writes about 'em, so with apologies to Ticket Vic Fortenbach for stepping on his toes with a bit about ticket dispensers (I made him promise to never do it again, Vic), I am happy to present the first in what I hope will become at least an occasional column here in* Play Meter: *Johnny's Corner.*

Williams/Bally WPC display driver power boards

Problem: On a *World Cup Soccer* pin, the display did not work. Solution: When brought into the shop, the top glass was removed and voltages checked at the dot-matrix display. Voltages were not correct. Checked dot matrix display on another WPC pin and it was found to be good. Went back into game and checked voltages at driver board. Again, voltages were not correct. Got out circuit diagrams on power driver board and traced inputs to several components. They were bad and were replaced. After each component was replaced, problem with power supply seemed to be getting worse.

Took out board again and hooked it up to a Huntron tracker (if you have the money, get one!). Tested each circuit in circuit OK. Board still did not work. Retraced the diagram again and found a possible solution, a zener diode in the circuit. Tested diode and found voltage across it to be only 18 volts. It is a 65-volt diode. Replaced diode. Installed board. Game works.

The diode was 65 volts, so when the tracker was hooked up it gave a good zener reading since the tracker puts out a 5 volt current to simulate board power. Upon taking the chip out of circuit (desoldering), the chip again seemed to be OK. Got another 65-volt diode and compared the two. Obviously the diode from the board was bad. The 5 volts from the tracker did not allow the diode to break down and thus appeared to be working correctly (always check the diagrams of any component thoroughly!).

Ticket mech tester

This is a great 'tool' to have on hand for the ticket mech repairman in all of us! What you will need:

1. Ticket mech Molex connector from game
2. Peter Chou or same as power supply
3. Momentary push-button
4. 5 volt LED
5. 18 Ga. or whatever wire
6. Broken ticket mech (duh)

How to do it:

Take the Molex connector from the game you pilfered (you need about 2 inches of wire with it) and strip the ends. Next, take the power supply and get your +5, 12 volt and ground terminals ready. Take some of the wire and splice the +5 volt out from the power supply to the push-button. Then, take some more wire and splice from the switch into the +5 on the connector. Take the 12-volt from the P/S and splice it into the 12-volt on the connector and attach the ground wire.

Then take the LED you stole and attach it to the ground and the pulse output from the ticket mech. You now have a fully functioning "redemption game." The only other thing you need would be a stack of tickets. With this device you can tell everything that would ever be wrong with a ticket mech. Bad motor, opto sensor, gearbox, rollers, bent ticket guides, etc. Also, you can hook up a ticket counter (again pilfered from somewhere) to see accurately if it is counting tickets correctly. This also works on Entropy 2000 series mechs (my god, how did that slip in?).

Speaking of Entropy

Re-engineer Entropy ticket mechs.

Bring any Entropy mech in the shop, take off the "quick release tab," put the screw in the other way, and put some lok-tite on it. Before I came up with this fix we used to go to an Entropy mech about seven to 10 times a day for a ticket jam. Now that is down to zero.

Sega's *Cut the Cheese*

Problem: The ticket holder (you know, the metal frame inside the game that holds tickets) is too tall. The tickets keep getting caught on the lip of the holder.

Solution(s):

1. Place a block of wood or other material inside the holder to raise tickets up.

2. Cut off the front part of the holder just past the height of a single stack of tickets (or how many stacks you put in it) and, using a file, put a smooth radius on the lip you just cut. Put some electrical tape over it to make sure it is smooth.

ICE's new *Bozo Grand Prize*

Problem: Same as *Cut the Cheese* but different part causing problem. The low-ticket sensor switch blade keeps getting caught on the outer surfaces of the tickets, causing them to be held up and broken off when the tickets advance inside the mech.

Solution: Take off the low-ticket switch and wrap a couple turns of electrical tape around it to hold it in the closed position. You can also reverse the normally open and normally closed connectors (while still leaving switch unattached) or you can short the common and the input leads to each other while leaving the switch off.

Both of the solutions will solve most any of these problems with any type of ticket-dispensing machine. When the low ticket sensing switches don't seem to work right or jam the dispenser (How many of you actually use the damn lights anyway?) take the switches off!

Another good tip: Be sure the least trusted employees never know how to take the ticket guides off of a Deltronics mech. I have had virtually 10 good working ticket mechs destroyed by some lunatic ripping out the guide and trying to stuff it back in. Oh well, there will be more...Just be warned.

Problem with *Area 51/ Maximum Force* guns

Recently, we have been having problems with the Happ guns that came with *Area 51*. This is what has been found:

Problem: Some customers would come up to us saying that the guns did not fire or misfired. Upon going to the game and testing the guns several times, they would be in perfect working order.

☞ Had technician disassemble both guns and check. No problems

☞ Checked guns in setup. OK. Recalibrated just in case. OK

☞ Same problem next day

Solution: Apparently the tech that checked it missed the fact that both guns had loose screws inside the guns!

☞ Put circuit board screws back inside screw holes (epoxy had to be used on one of the screw holes because it was stripped). The missing screws allowed the detector board to move around, missing the screen. Put blue lok-tite (blue gel) in all screws that hold circuit board down (2).

☞ Before assembling guns, checked accuracy and in working order. OK.

☞ Assembled guns. Guns did not fire!

☞ Disassembled guns again and rechecked. OK.

☞ After using common sense decided that the trigger/switch must be out of position when guns are assembled.

☞ Re-bent both trip wires on microswitches and reset triggers in guns

☞ Reassembled guns and retested. OK.

The trip wires must have either been bent by the loose screws or were not set correctly at the factory. This should be a permanent fix but

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time will tell.

I hope this one saves some poor soul some time and also the expense of replacing the Happ guns.

Problems with *Time Crisis II*

These are some problems we have encountered with *Time Crisis II* and the steps to solve them:

1. Upon start-up, on a two-player model or even a single player might also do this: One of the sides will be out of sync with the other in the self-test routines. It will also freeze on SRAM test. The board was sent with a defective RAM chip or has become defective. The board must be sent to Namco and a new one sent back.

Since Namco has opted for all new games to use Surface Mount Technology on every new board, not much can be done to replace the chip unless you want to go out and spend about $15,000 on SMT equipment.

2. Close examination of a two-player cabinet will show telltale signs of monitor magnetism in the upper middle of the monitors. The only reasoning I can see is that the sides of the cabinet where the monitors sit next to each other are not shielded, thus both monitors have become magnetized by each other. Use a degaussing coil to demagnetize the monitors. Check them about every week for signs of magnetism.

Other stuff

Any new Namco product, especially *Motocross Go!* Before taking a circular saw to it, check the PCB connections! (In other words, before calling tech support to chew their ear off!) After ordering two, we got one in, set it up, turned the game on, and found out that the controls didn't work. Well, the back was popped off and we found that somehow the connections came loose. After plugging that in, viola! The second one came with the same problem.

The best JAMMA pin extractor I've ever used is a straight stainless-steel pick. It doesn't bend like a paper clip and works every time. This also works on edge connectors. When installing new monitors in old cabinets, make sure if a monitor needs an isolation transformer that you put one in! ***[Randy's note: Actually, the opposite is more important. When installing an old monitor in a new cabinet, you'll need the isolation transformer. Since modern monitors with SMPS do not require an isolation transformer, it's a waste of money to put one in a modern cabinet.]***

When something goes wrong with a game, the first item you should grab (after your brain) is a voltmeter! More than 65% of the game problems at the arcade stem from a power supply failure or other failure that can be determined with one. For some reason (probably due to the 90+ degree temperatures in the arcade) the power supplies don't last that long. But as always, Peter Chou can be more helpful on that subject than I can.

The best way to replace a *Skee-Ball* spring is from underneath. I can replace and re-adjust a *Skee-Ball* mech in about seven minutes using this method. Although, if they haven't been moved in about five years, you can find some pretty neat stuff under there (quarters, balls, dust, and the occasional Hulk Hogan shirt).

If you get any new games with a Happ quick-release coin mech, the best solution I've found is to replace the quick-release with a regular coin door set-up. The Happ has too much freedom of movement, and also, most people forget to put the lock back on after clearing a coin jam.

The best pinball cleaner is a Novus #1 or #2 plastic cleaner and Windex. After wiping off the playfield again with a clean rag, apply small amounts of Pledge to a rag and work it into the playfield. Afterward, buff it out and make some money. We literally have people come in from out of state just for the pins. We found that some other cleaners rip up the Mylar on the playfield and make an ugly mess out of the playfield. The best troubleshooters are the customers. If they say there is a problem, almost 99% of the time they are right.

Got a lock without a key or a lock that has a snapped key in it? The easiest thing to do is get a very long flat blade screwdriver and wedge it into the key slot and try to torque the lock case over. If that doesn't work you can always jam the screwdriver between the door and the cabinet (if it is a back door lock) and try to bend the cam on the lock. Sometimes this is not a good idea, you can split the fiberboard on the door and it doesn't look nice any more after a couple of wood screws have been driven into it.

The surefire way, but also the longest way, is to get a power drill with two or three different size bits. The first bit takes out the teeth in the lock so a bigger drill bit can go in without getting jammed. If the second bit doesn't accomplish this either, drill out the cam bolt or spin the cylinder. Then you can grab the third bit, and usually that is as far as you will have to go. It's a good idea to also bring some multi-purpose oil along to keep things cool. ▲

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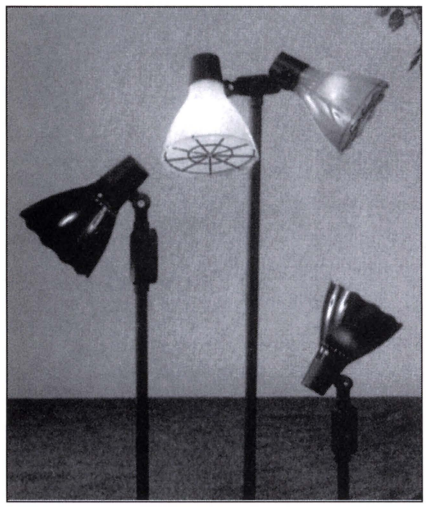

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M&N's Bright Idea book

M&N International's fall/winter 1998 party and promotion "Bright Idea" book is designed to take the hassle out of holiday and promotional planning. The book contains an extensive index, tiered pricing for volume orders, and several shipping methods to accommodate the budget conscious. The 196-page catalog is geared toward a diverse customer base: from managers and party planners to teachers and caterers, in essence, anyone who has a party to plan, a business to promote, a meal to cater, or a bulletin board to decorate. The catalog offers a selection of items and ideas for fall and winter holidays like Halloween, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, and Christmas. To receive a free catalog, call (800) 479-2043.

Floor matting specialists offer Giant Step

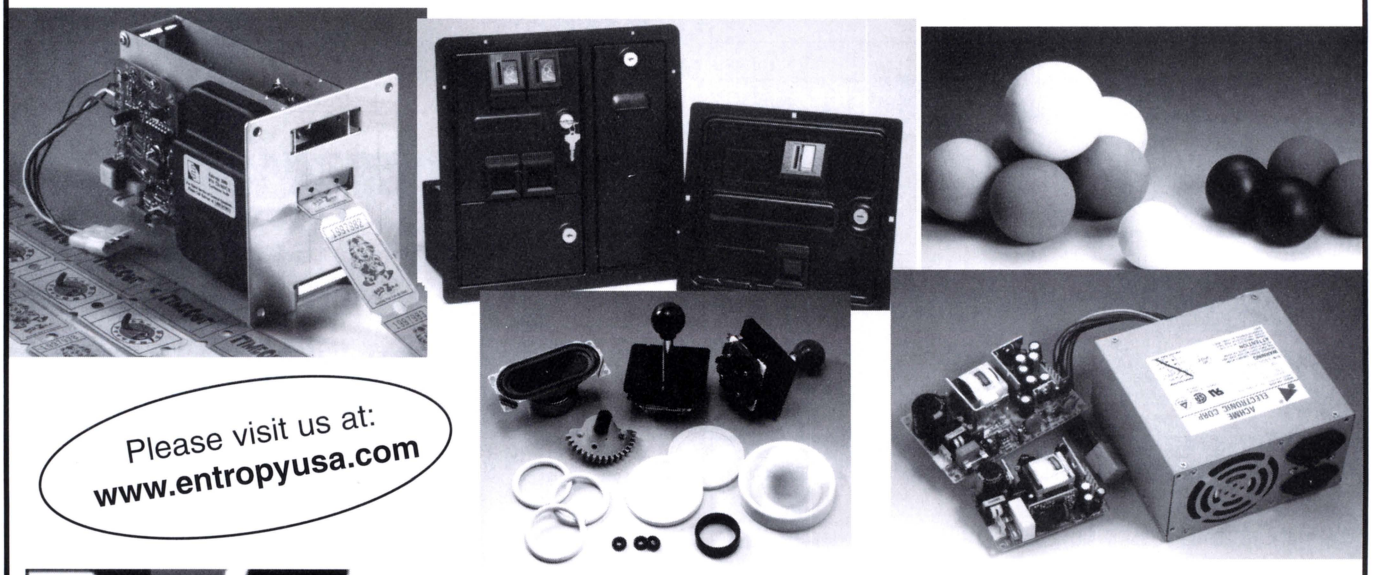
Akrocorp, a national floor matting manufacturer, and Martinson-Nicholls Inc., a commercial floor matting distributor, have blended resources and expertise to offer commercial, institutional, and general users virtually unlimited sizing and shapes in floor matting for both indoor and outdoor applications. Floor mat applications that start with outdoor floor matting can reduce tracked-in dirt up to 30 percent before reaching indoor surfaces. Downsized maintenance

forces have more time, plus wear and tear on floors and carpets is significantly reduced.

AkroCorp and Martinson-Nicholls also invented a revolutionary new ADA anchoring system that has dramatically reduced dangerous and unwanted movement of indoor and outdoor matting in high traffic areas without gluing. This new system performs in any climate and allows fast, simplified mat removal for cleaning and maintenance, especially in outdoor applications.

Martinson-Nicholls president Daniel Ruminski stated in a recent interview, "Our partnership and combining of expertise has made infinite sizing a reality, even for large wet area applications such as water parks, swimming complexes, and military water training bases." Ruminski also pointed out that return on investment studies show properly sized floor matting compared to traditional limited size rental matting will pay for itself in less than one year. With the partnership's new Giant Step floor matting system, custom sizes and shapes are now readily available. Architects and builders are encouraged to contact Martinson-Nicholls for help in directly and indirectly reducing construction, post construction, and future maintenance costs. Expert consultation for unusual or complex matting applications is also available. Contact Daniel Ruminski at Martinson-Nicholls for information and sample materials, (440) 951-1312; fax (440) 951-1315; e-mail (giantstep@floormat.com); Web site: (www.floonnat.com). ▲

We Supply Components for the Coin-Op World!



Please visit us at:
www.entropyusa.com

Entropy U.S.A.

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Bensenville, Il • 60106
(Ph) (800) 241-0633
Fax (630) 616-1866
e-mail entropyusa @ sprynet.com

TRAVEL TRACKS

Leisure Industry Week — **October 6-8**

Birmingham, United Kingdom
Call 01932-564455; fax 01932-560009.

Cairo Fun and Amusement Expo — **October 7-11**

Nasr City, Cairo, Egypt
Cairo International Congress Centre.
Call +20 50 349404; fax +20 50 349404.

18th Annual Waterpark Symposium and Trade Show — **October 8-10**

Orlando, Fla.
Call Patty Miller, (913)599-0300; fax (913)599-0520.

8th Fun Expo — **October 14-17**

Orlando, Fla.
Orange County Convention Center. Call (888)FUN-EXPO or (203)840-5606; fax (203)840-5593.

PM

NAMA National Convention and Trade Show — **October 15-17**

Chicago, Ill.
McCormick Place. Call (312)346-0370; fax (312)704-4140.

ENADA — **October 15-18**

Rome, Italy
Rome Fair (Via dei Georgofili). Call (06)4403686 - 4402718 - 88473217; fax (06)4402718.

5th Park Show International — **October 21-24**

Rimini, Italy
Call 39-541-71-1711; fax 39-541-78-6686.

Amusement Industry Expo, I-X Center — **October 27-29**

Cleveland, Ohio
Call (800)870-3976 or (216)265-2619; fax (216)265-2621.

NDA 5th Annual Singles and Doubles International Championships — **October 30-November 2**

San Francisco, Calif.
Marriott San Francisco Airport. Call (800)808-9884; fax (317)387-0999.

Australia Amusement Expo '98 — **November 2-5**

Queensland's Gold Coast, Australia
Royal Pines Resort. Call Ken Priest, 61-7-3841-1021; fax 61-7-3841-1332.

IMA — **November 18-21**

Frankfurt, Germany
Frankfurt Fairgrounds. Call +49-211-901-9182; fax +49-211-901-9127.

80th IAAPA Convention and Trade Show — **November 17-21**

Dallas, Texas
Call (703)836-4800; fax (703)836-4801.

PM

4th International Amusement Exop — **October 15-17**

Buenos Aires, Argentina
Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel and Towers. Fax +54 1 322 7039.

Pinball Expo '98 — **October 22-25**

Rosemont, Ill.
Ramada Hotel/O'Hare. Call (800)323-FLIP or (330)369-1192; fax (330)369-6279.

EELEX — **December 13-15**

Moscow, Russia
World's Fair Exhibitions. Call +44 161 624 3687; fax +44 161 665 1260; e-mail (wfair@worldsfair.co.uk).

Amusement Trades Exhibition International — **January 27-29**

London, England
Earls Court. Call +44 (0)1273 204817; fax +44 (0) 1273 204827; e-mail (atei@fastnet.uk).

Amusement Showcase International — **March 11-13**

Las Vegas, Nev.
Las Vegas Convention Center. Call (708)333-9292; fax (708)333-4086.

PM

PM denotes shows where ***Play Meter*** will be exhibiting. Please stop by and introduce yourself to our staff.

AMOA EXPO '98 Attendance low, QUALITY HIGH

From left: Doug Minter of Tip Top Amusement watches as Tim Jackson of SNK, Billy O'Bryan of Bilco Amusement, and David Cottrell of Brady Dist. play *Beast Busters: Second Nightmare*.

Gordon Smart of Smart Industries explained that to have a successful show you only need the right 20 people. For some, the right people were at AMOA Expo '98 in Nashville in mid-September, but not for others, as we found out in comments like these from exhibitors:

"You pick up leads at the show, but that's an unknown factor for business later. Right now, we won't pay for this booth."

"They should pull the plug on this show. When you go to the expense to exhibit and get only a handful of orders—if that—is it really worth coming?"

"How many shows can the small manufacturers afford?"

"This is the year that will make or break a show. With three in a row (AMOA, Fun Expo, and IAAPA), something has got to change."

"You see the same 75 operators at every show, but we have to exhibit here."

There were also those who thought the show was well worth the time and effort, as we see in these comments:

"We've been pleasantly surprised. It's been a little busier than anticipated."

"We've gotten good feedback. We don't see actual purchases made at the show, but a few months down the road we see the interest. It definitely pays to be here."

"The show is getting smaller, but we still find it valuable to come."

One exhibitor took the time to make a phone call to our offices to voice his opinion. "It was a great show. AMOA did a very good job. The association is in transition right now but they are on the right track. No one expected much from this show, but even though it was small, it was a good value for those who came."

In addition to exhibitors, operators were at the show for their own reasons, as illustrated by these comments: "If you're not dealing with multiple voices, you're not getting the whole picture," said one operator on the value of attending trade shows and networking.

Another operator added, "I don't come to shows just to see equipment. I come to hear what others are saying about my industry. We are all in this together for the long haul, so we need to know all we can."

Prior to AMOA, there was speculation that the show was going to be a bust. Phone conversations about AMOA usually were pessimistic. Ironically, perhaps those negative vibes worked in its favor in a strange way as Damon Paramore of Dynamo explained: "It was better than we expected," he began. "It's like going to a movie. If you've heard a lot of hype about how great it's going to be, your expectations are so high that chances are you'll be disappointed. However, if your husband drags you to an action drama and you're convinced you won't like it, just the opposite happens and you enjoy it more than you thought you would. This AMOA show is the same way. Before the show I heard a lot of negative comments and frankly wasn't expecting much. So I was pleasantly surprised."

The show was held at the mammoth Opryland Hotel which prompted this comment: "It's nice having everyone under one roof again, but the roof is too big!" Getting around was a little difficult given its size. As someone said, "A guy could make a living giving directions around here." Finally, this comment seemed to echo what many were thinking: "Please do not under any circumstances have this show back here again."

But in the long run, Nashville proved to be a fitting place for the 50th anniversary celebration for AMOA, an association whose roots are in the music business.

Equipment highlights

Everyone eventually found their way to the convention center, and it was down to business. There were over 200 companies offering everything from ATMs and coin changers to video games and vending units. For those wanting to keep better track of their income, Coin ConneXion, Premier Data, and Silent Partner 2000 were kept busy explaining their systems. Coin ConneXion's Ricky Ross said that they were having a good show. Passing by the booth verified that as it was always busy.

Parts suppliers received a myriad of questions, and they had just as many answers. Operators said these companies are one of the most important reasons for coming to a convention, as this operator explained: "I can basically see new games at my distributor's open house after the show. It's people like the parts suppliers I want to see. In fact, there are quite a few booths I'm spending my time at that don't involve games."

Announcing an upcoming pinball tournament system, (l-r): Gary Stern of Sega Pinball, Elaine Ditton and Richard Ditton of Incredible Technologies, and Bill Cravens of Bulldog Amusements.

This seems like an opportune spot to mention several comments concerning booth placement. "I don't know why they put the huge game manufacturers in front of the exhibit hall and the smaller guys in the back. If the big guys were in the back the traffic would flow a lot better. We'd see more people while they wouldn't see any less because everyone wants to see the latest games," said one parts supplier.

Others agreed: "Your position on the show floor makes a big difference when you're a small exhibitor." "Put the big manufacturers in the back so operators can at least see us on their way to see what they have."

Operators scanned the floor for reasonably priced video games, usually huddling with their peers to compare notes about what looked good. "One of the problems in this business is the limited number of locations for games. It's a plus for any game that gives you more freedom in the types of locations to place it, " noted one operator.

So, what did look good? Gun games: SNK's *Beast Busters*, Midway's *CarnEvil*, Sega's *House of the Dead 2*, Namco's *Time Crisis II,* and Atari's *Site 4*. Most agreed that they were on the violent side, but just as readily admitted that they would make money. Commenting on *Beast Busters*, developed for the Hyper Neo-Geo 64, one distributor said, "It's going to make money. The gun system is a good idea with updated software for a reasonable price.The zombie theme should go over well."

Another operator said this about *Site 4*: "Atari did not step over that heavy violence line with *Site 4*. It created a good game that can be placed almost anywhere. It was a smart move to include the target practice feature."

Another operator, waiting in line for his turn on *CarnEvil*, said it was unrealistic to think kids believe it's OK to shoot people after playing a video game. "Come on," he began, "these games offer a challenge and an outlet for aggression. Kids have fun and it ends there. The industry is going to great lengths to label these games so little ones aren't exposed, but for kids that young, parents should be monitoring their activities. They can't look around for a scapegoat when something goes wrong."

There were more comments on the issue of video violence but the one that seemed to dominate was this: "Manufacturers are giving us options to tone down the blood and guts. We as operators are putting stickers on our machines. Distributors are reminding us or recommending ratings for older games. But the bottom line to the whole issue is that players who we depend on for our living want this type of game. If they stopped playing them, I guarantee that we'd soon see a rash of a different type of game."

But it wasn't just gun games that drew their share of raves. Konami's *Fisherman's Bait* was called by some "the best different game," while Midway's *NFL Blitz '99* is a shoe-in as a must-have game. *Panic Park* brought smiles to players' faces. One operator said he loved the game but thought it was too big and too expensive. After playing a few games, he offered that it may be worth trying. Sega's *Spike Out*, a two-player game where you and a partner play together against the bad guys was another interesting game. An operator said this about Atari's *Gauntlet Legends*: "*Gauntlet Legends*, being a strategy team-playing game, could be a wonderful change for video games."

Sega Enterprises showed *Blood Bullet* developed on the Naomi system. It's going to be a game with super graphics, great play, and priced right. "We made operators a promise for games they could afford, and we're keeping that promise," noted Sega's Al Stone.

Speaking of video games, it was impressive to see that the majority (could it have been 100 percent?) of video game exhibitors had the Parental Advisory Stickers prominently displayed on their games. Some have gone a step further by incorporating the label in the game's artwork. "Personally, I never thought that the violence in games was an issue. I think I was a little surprised that your magazine seemed to be taking up the banner on this thing. However, I'd like to say that I took it a lot more seriously thanks to *Play Meter*," said an operator blasting away at a gruesome beast.

Two companies, Dixie-Narco and R-O International, had a array of vending products. Sam Gossard of Dixie-Narco said, "The show is getting smaller but we still find it valuable to come. We provide operators an alternative source of revenue. Most successful operators already have in place what they need for a vending operation, such as manpower and vehicles. Every year we see more operators stopping by and considering vending."

Remember not so long ago the shows were literally bursting as the seams with photo sticker machines? Not so anymore, but the ones that were at AMOA '98 were great. Atlus Dream Entertainment showed *Print Club* in the Sega booth. Atlus has a new deal with the National Hockey League to feature logos from each team in the frame designs. Sticker Inc. offered *Sticker Player* with a zoom feature and two sticker sizes. The SNK booth featured *Neo Print*, distributed by Apple Distributing.

As he was waiting for his photo stickers to emerge, an operator had this to say: "It reminds me of the basketball games. There were about 25 companies showing a basketball game at one show, and by the next year it was back to the ones who did it right to start with. There were so many sticker machines at one show, I figured there would be some weeding out. They weren't as popular as everyone thought they'd be. However, I have to add that the ones I operate have been some of my best earners."

For pinball fans there was some good news. Sega Pinball and Incredi-

Midway's *NFL Blitz '99* was popular.

ble Technologies announced a merger of their combined expertise through a planned tournament system that will involve developing games with classic pinball themes in tournament versions.

"The Incredible Technologies group and its ITS system is well proven, and they will be modifying our systems," said Gary Stern of Sega Pinball. "Many years ago, when Incredible Technologies and Sega Pinball were young, our first pinball model was programmed by Incredible Technologies. They know tournaments. We'll be back working with them."

Elaine Ditton of Incredible Technologies commented, "I'm thrilled to working with Gary again. This is a natural. In the past, technological advancements have helped bring pinball back. Tournament play can do the same. We're going to set the world on fire with tournament pinball!"

Operators listening to the announcement on the show floor were elated. "The reason people are not making money on pinballs is they don't know how to run them," one noted. "I think with this collaboration operators will once again be proud to operate pinballs and players will be happy too," another added.

Another operator added some words of wisdom: "They aren't going to sit on their asses and let the pinball market shrink."

Music was major. Of course, discussions focused on the new digital downloaded music. Many operators are still a bit skeptical, while others are champing at the bit to get started with it. TouchTunes, which only a week prior to the show installed their first units, seemed happy about the response. One operator insisted that the numbers simply don't work, referring to the revenue sharing arrangement with TouchTunes. But for everyone who felt it didn't make sense, there was someone else saying it was the only thing that made sense. As with other innovations in the industry, only time will tell. But TouchTunes feels it has made a giant leap towards the future.

Arachnid's *Baudy Songs* is another downloadable jukebox, but the company intends to offer an array of options for extra revenue. One is advertising to appear on the screen. Although not available yet, it will include high-res graphics. Cybertainment showed another take on the downloadable concept, a music drive kit operators can install in existing jukeboxes to change them to downloadable units.

Although many were speculating on the future of music, the CD jukebox offerings from the jukebox manufacturers were impressive, beginning at Rock-Ola with its new *Corvette 8000* with its classic Corvette imagery and the *Harley Legend* with Harley-Davidson's distinctive styling and logos. Rowe showed the new *Encore* with Rowe's recognizable styling and classy looks. Wurlitzer introduced the *Princess*, a wall model of the *One More Time* nostalgic jukebox. NSM's new *Midnight Sapphire* was stunning.

One of the most popular forms of coin-op entertainment is most definitely the countertop. Operators are so enamored of this form of entertainment they've credited countertops with literally saving their businesses. Here's what we heard: "I have found my return on investment better on countertops than anything—and I mean anything—else in years. The initial cost is low, but the return is high. You wouldn't be here talking to me right now if it weren't for countertops."

Merit, who lead the way in this area, showed the newest version *MegaTouch Millennium*, which will be available in January. It has a futuristic cabinet design right in step with its name and it will include some exciting new features.

There was a new player in the countertop game, Bulova Technologies. Its game, *Silver Ball*, has 40 games and includes head-to-head competition.

Midway's *TouchMaster 5000* offers operators four new games including the long-awaited Trivia, a category operators felt was too important to overlook. Its games like *Centipede* and *Breakout* make it attractive.

Micro's Global HD countertop has some really cool games in store, and JVL's Concorde was named by its loyal following as the "best countertop in the market."

Awards

The AMOA presented awards in 11 categories: Most Played Video Game to Incredible Technologies for *Golden Tee Golf;* Most Played Pinball Game to Bally for *Attack From Mars*; Most

Roger Sharpe of Midway samples *Sports Blaster* by Strategic Innovation.

Spike Out by Sega kept players' interest.

Played Conversion Kit to Incredible Technologies for *Golden Tee Golf*; Most Played New Technology to Merit Industries for *MegaTouch XL*; Most Innovative Dart Game to Arachnid for *Galaxy Darts*; Operators' Choice Pool Table to Valley for *Cougar ZD7*; Most Innovative Jukebox to Rowe for *Venus LaserStar CD-100*; Most Played Redemption Game to I.C.E. for *Cyclone*; Most Played Prize Dispensing Game to Smart Technologies for *Clean Sweep*; Most Played Fast Action Redemption Game to I.C.E. for *Cyclone*; and Most Played Other Game to Dynamo for *Air Hockey*.

Sharon Harris and Steve Kordek at the Century Club meeting.

Century Club Meeting

As is tradition, the Century Club Meeting was held during the show. It's a rare opportunity for those who have been in the coin machine business for 25 years or more to get together, share a few stories, and enjoy each other's company. This time the event was sponsored by Stan Levine. Steve Kordek has been the organizer since its inception, and this year Sharon Harris, daughter of member Stan Harris, shared the duties. The group was bigger than usual and old friends greeted each other warmly and shared stories of days long gone. The next meeting will be held during the March 1999 Amusement Showcase International.

PLAYERS' PICKS

Gabe Westmont (16)
Madison, Wis.

Site 4
Gauntlet Legends
Carn Evil
Panic Park
Fisherman's Bait
Star Wars Trilogy

Gordon Westmont (11)
Madison, Wis.

Teraburst
Star Wars Trilogy
Gauntlet Legends

Greg Theard (16)
New Orleans, La.

Vapor TRX
Teraburst
Daytona 2
Monster Bash
Gauntlet Legends
Carn Evil
Racing Jam II

David Smith (19)
Metairie, La.

NFL Blitz '99
Need for Speed 2 SE
Teraburst
Racing Jam II
Daytona 2

David Smith (l) and Greg Theard play *Teraburst*.

Gabe Westmont (l) and Carson Jenkins enjoy *Panic Park*.

Other events

This 50th anniversary of AMOA got off to a grand start with a special dinner honoring the past presidents. The group included Lou Ptacek of Bird Music, who was president in 1970, to incoming president Jim Stansfield of Stansfield Vending. Others included Russ Mawdsley, Fred Collins, Don Van Brackel, Bob Nims, Norman Pink, Leoma Ballard, Wes Lawson, Dock Ringo, John Estridge, Al Marsh, Dick Hawkins, Wally Bohrer, Clyde Knupp, Jack Kerner, Gene Urso, Craig Johnson, R.A. Green, Randy Chilton, Jerry Derrick, and Don Hesch.

Attendees were invited to a special cocktail reception and an evening at the Grand Ole Opry in lieu of the traditional banquet. Operators said they enjoyed the night and would recommend a similar evening wherever the show is held. "The banquet was getting stale. We needed a change," said an operator. ▲

Past AMOA presidents, (l-r): Lou Ptacek, Randy Chilton, and Clyde Knupp.

At the Midway distributor meeting, (l-r): Jim Groeschl, famed NFL halfback Rocky Bleier, Hal Lieberman, and Rachel Davies.

AMERICAN ALPHA

Desert Storm (redemption): This four reel, one pay-line skill stop game offers players a bonus if an ambulance, helicopter, or jet fighter lights up in the video display bonus area. Phone: (732)438-0420 or e-mail (aai@webspan.net).

AMERICAN CHANGER

AC7000 (bill dispenser): This unit accepts $5, $10, $20 (even the new $20) bills to exchange for $1, $2, or $5 bills. Its capacity is 500 bills with 1,000 and 2,000 optional capacity. Phone: (800)741-9840; Web site (www.americanchanger.com).

AMERICAN GAME TECHNOLOGY

Golden Touch Multigame (gaming): A package with nine different casino favorites shown in upright, also available in Series 9000 bar slant-top or kit, which can be adapted to amusements. A totally cashless system that utilizes a memory chip in the key and eliminates the need for ticket printers or coin hoppers.

Casino Extravaganza (home PC): Up to 22 casino games including roulette, poker, keno, and more. Phone: (888)248-4263); Web site (www.agtco.com)

ANGLE MFG.

The Layback 25 (cabinet): Ideal housing for golf, bowling, and other trackball games, made of 3/4" particle board with a high-pressure laminate finish. Kit installation is available at the Angle factory.

Vegas-Look (cabinet): New metal-look casino-style cabinet with black finish.

Also shown: Extensive line of cabinets for amusement and gaming applications and all contract manufacturing needs. Phone: (800)347-4405

APPLE PHOTO SYSTEMS

Neo Print (photo booth): Customized units for the Diesel clothing chain and Tower Records were shown along with the regular Neo Print. Customers can have their photo taken with a choice of 40 different backgrounds and receive a sheet of 16 miniprints. Phone: (888)607-2444

ARACHNID

Baudy Songs (downloadable jukebox): This jukebox will enable operators to download music and secure extra revenues from advertising. Features include high-res graphics, touch screen selection, and animated graphics. Not available yet.

Black Widow (darts): This electronic dart machine has an innovative two-target design that offers the complete function of two independent Galaxy games. Easier league play, simultaneous play, advertising, and enhanced dual communication. Phone: (815)654-0212.

ATARI GAMES

Gauntlet Legends (video): As dastardly characters emerge from hiding to aid the cause of darkness, four heroes emerge to save the day. Available in 39" and 25" configurations.

Site 4 (video): A sequel to Area 51, this gun game features 18 different training events in an awesome all-out alien war. Available in a 39" showcase, standard 25", or a universal kit.

Vapor TRX (video): It's an exhilarating roller coaster ride loaded with weapons, turbos, and short-cuts. Players pilot sleek flying ships and blast their way through harrowing terrain after selecting from six different vehicles. Phone: (408)434-3700; Web site (www.atarigames. com).

ATLUS DREAM ENTERTAINMENT

Print Club (photo stickers): The machine features a Mitsubishi camera, Sony printer, and Sega-designed PC board. Some software cartridges feature the option of adding messages. Atlus has a licensing agreement with the National Hockey League to feature logos from each of the league's teams on the frame designs. Phone: (949)753-7883; Web site (www.atlusdream.com).

ATM AMERICA

9600 Series (ATM): The all new engineered Triton unit has an array of advanced features and is upgradable. It comes with a full color high-res monitor, thermal printer, up to four cassette capacity, dip card reader, swipe and smart card reader, keypad with integral Braille, and signage options. Phone: (803)736-8060

BESTCO

Fantasy 5 (5 line): Features include direct printer and ticket hookup, on-screen setup, super pool bonus, and three levels of fantasy 5 bonus. It is 8-line harness- ready (a PC board, not a computer).

Magic 7 (8-line): Touch screen-capable game that is 8-line harness-ready. Comes with on-screen setup, direct printer and ticket hookup, six button or 10-button installation, on-screen progressive and bonus round.

Super Cabinet (cabinet): Brand-new wood and chrome cabinet.

Also shown: Wide range of 8-lines and pokers such as Wild Cherries and Super Poker. BestCo carries all Omega lines. Phone: (800)306-4263

BGI INC.

Lucky Strike (phone card dispenser): Customers can purchase phone cards and they'll enjoy the added bonus of a sweepstakes with a top prize of up to $1,000. Phone: (888)338-0065.

BOAZ TECHNOLOGIES

Demoscan (specialty): Demonstration kiosk or preview station with touch panel for use in retail and other environments to show short film clips or sound samples of music, videos, programs, or products. Three models: DSW 5.6, Demonscan Jr., and DS 13T. Phone: (888)983-5555; e-mail (boazcorp@earthlink.net)

BULOVA TECHNOLOGIES LLC

Silver Ball: Upright or countertop

featuring 40 games, including word, strategy, quiz, skill, picture, and trivia games with head-to-head competition. Futuristic design, updatable for new games, and VGA graphics with Pentium processor. Sealed hard drive, full-motion video capability, digital stereo sound, and 20" touchscreen and button combo game play. Options include ticket dispenser, bill acceptor, and token payout. Phone: (717) 299-2581.

BVC TECHNOLOGIES

Micro 2001 (ATM): This wall- or counter-mounted unit has a reliable internal swipe card reader, remote monitoring and program loading, large capacity cassette (1,000 notes), an SVGA full-motion video screen with sound, thermal printer, impact triggered siren alarm, and options like state of the art tracking and a high security floor-mounted pedestal. Phone: (800)750-9070

CADILLAC JACK INC.

Five-liners Funny Fruit, Reel Picker, Texas Reel, Master 5, Reel of Fortune, Pirate's Gold, Barnyard 5, and Klondike 5: All five-liners feature five ways to win, three bonus levels, progressive jackpot, and skill stops. New cabinets, on which five-line games are featured, were shown: countertop, the Seville, and the Eldorado.

Also shown: Vegas Style Blackjack, Three-player Models, One Player Blackjack, Gold Touch line of games, Eight-line games, and Super 97 poker. Phone: (770) 908-2094.

CENTAUR INTERNATIONAL

Psychic Force 2012 (video): This Taito fighting game invites players to battle in the air, attack from anywhere in a 360-degree arc, and make action commands wherever the opponent is located. It's available on an all-new powerful PC board. Phone: (757)430-9268 or e-mail (centaur01@aol.com).

CES

Galaxy (video system): Multicartridge cocktail cabinet system that now offers 14 games including Pac-Man, Ms. Pac-Man, Prism Poker, Solar Solitaire, Power Pairs, Seek the Peaks, Pharaoh's Tomb, 21 Thunder Plus, and more. Phone: (847)695-0023

CHAMPION SHUFFLEBOARD

The Bullet (shuffleboard): New features include voice sounds, a pin-gate to eliminate free play, dip switch settings, a shorter size, and a four-point scoring selection. It's wired to accept lighting kits. Phone: (800)826-7856.

CYBERTAINMENT SYSTEMS

Cybertunes (download jukebox): Features on this downloadable music drive kit include CD quality sound, flashing album covers, two 150-watt amps, and options such as free play. Phone: (561)966-4534 or e-mail (cybertunes@internetmci.com).

DEVECKA ENTERPRISES

Drumscape (stage simulator): Drumscape is an audio-based unit which allows users to play drums along with musical selections of their choice. Features Yamaha drum pads and bass pedal, sticks attached to chains, standard PC, two 100-watt speakers, 100-watt sub-woofer, and extra pads for a simultaneous player two. Phone: (201) 939-4800; Web site (www.drumscape.com).

DESIGN PLUS

Pro Striker (bowler): Experience the excitement, sound, and feel of authentic bowling in a lot less space. Available in three lengths. Phone: (309)697-9778.

DIAMOND GAME ENTERPRISES

C-Cash ATM (ATM machine): DG'c ATM features customized graphics to match locations and allow for advertising.

Long Distance Calling Cards (phone cards): Audio and visual effects styled after a slot machine. Sweepstakes with every phone card . Phone (818) 727-1690; Web site (www.diamondgame.com).

Also shown: Lucky Shamrock (phone card dispenser).

DIXIE-NARCO

Beveragemax (vendor): Displays up to 45 different products. Package types can vary from glass, cans, PET bottles in 10, 12, 16, and 20 oz. sizes. Five delivery trays with nine columns. Self test system diagnostics.

Confectionary (vendor): Refrigeration system with lint-tolerant condenser. Galvanized steel construction. Snap-in vend motors. Electronic controller that provides accountablility and space to sales flexibility. Capable of dispensing large three oz. packages.

Beverage Merchandiser (vendor): Double-depth high capacity bottle vending. Newly dessigned merchandising door, large package-delivery port, triple depth high-capacity can vending, simple field conversion for different packages, multi pricing capability. Phone: (803)266-5000

DYNAMO

Black Light (air hockey): This air hockey is perfect in bars and other areas where the black light affects will be certain to attract players.

Also shown: regular air hockey, foosball, pool tables, and an extensive line of cabinets. Phone: (817)284-0114 or e-mail (dynsales@dynamo-ltd.com).

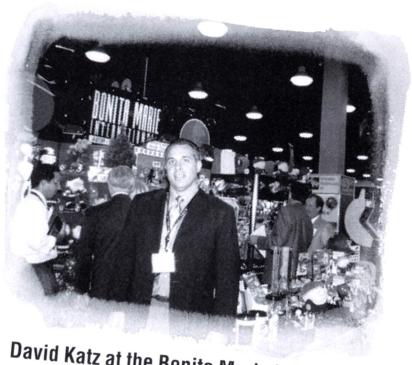
EMT

Muppett Babies Car (kiddie ride): Emmy award-winning series' character featured on each ride. Actual driving motion and sound, underframe rollers, and selectable ride length.

Muppett Babies Music Swing (kiddie ride): Riders sit opposite a Muppet Baby as both ride the swing and rock back and forth.

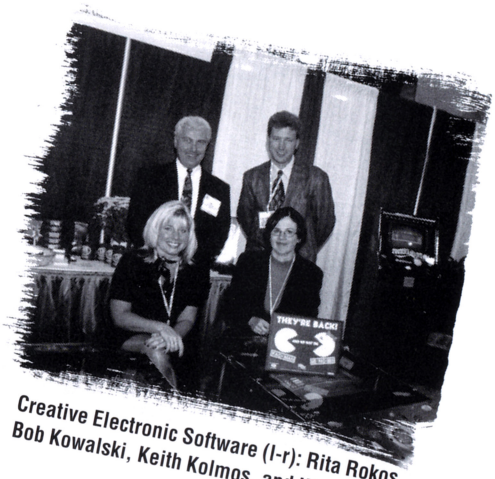
Muppett Babies Carousel (kiddie ride) : Two seat carousel allows young riders to sit with both Baby Kermit and Baby Fozzie as they rotate around.

Skywolf (kiddie ride): The whop,



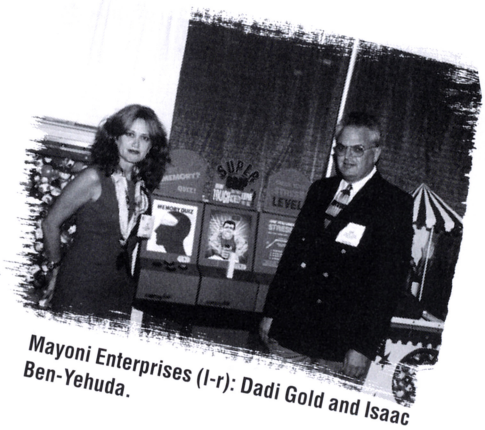
David Katz at the Bonita Marie booth.

WRG Services (l-r): Alan Conte of Conte Sales visits Mike Stevenson.

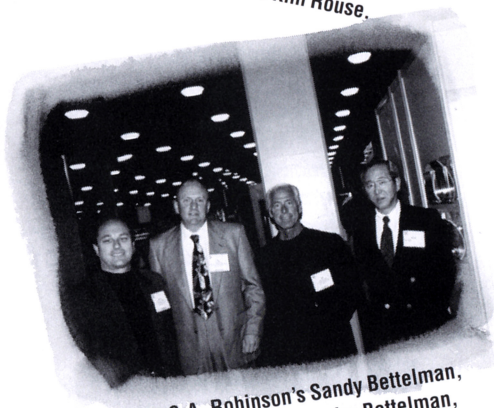


Creative Electronic Software (l-r): Rita Rokos, Bob Kowalski, Keith Kolmos, and Kim Rouse.

JVL (l-r): Jim Hall, Williams Enterprises' Stan Williams and Martha Austin, and Mort Ansky.



Mayoni Enterprises (l-r): Dadi Gold and Isaac Ben-Yehuda.



From left: C.A. Robinson's Sandy Bettelman, Capcom's Steve Blattspieler, Ira Bettelman, and Capcom's Mr. Minoru Sastani.

S&B Candy & Toys (l-r): Jeff Monar of Monar Amusements, Kari Finn, and Brian Riggles.

Skee-Ball (l-r): David McLaughlin and Mark Kane.

New Orleans Plush (l-r): Teresa Anderson, Jim McCormick of *Play Meter*, Darleen Hansen, and Don Glass.

Coin ConneXion: Dave Jensen shows operators his management program.

Kiddie Rides USA (l-r): Howard Cohen, Brian Carasik, and Carolina Creative Vending's Tim Leich.

Wells-Gardner (l-r): Tony Spear, Mark Komorowski, Wally Said, and Jon Alvarez of Amusement Emporium.

whop of the propellers and weapons firing come from the speakers. "Approaching sector B7, 25 knots," the speakers announce. As the stick is nudged, the chopper moves upward. Lights and controls on the front panel. Selectable ride length. Phone: (305) 592-5932.

EVERETT JAMES CO.

Wowie Zowie (gumball dispenser): Gumballs climb the auger, go across the gears, through the teeters, and then around the tornado to spin in the spiral. Its trip ends going back and forth on the track. While all of this occurs, music and lights entertain onlookers. The process lasts 30 seconds. Phone (801) 974-5346; Web site (wwweverett-james.com).

FIVE STAR REDEMPTION/ PLANET EARTH

Dinospin (redemption): Lighted clock face with motorized spinning bone, player console with large buttons and numeric display, speakers or sound effects, neon graphics, fast skill stop and player features, oversized height, easily programmable, dinosaur theme, sister of Dinoscore.

Also shown: Pirates Revenge, Grand Treasure Falls, and Surfin' Safari. Phone: (818) 773-6556.

FUN COMPANY

CT-2000 (cabinet): This universal cocktail cabinet accommodates any game. Features a 25" Wells-Gardner monitor, detachable and movable control panels, heavy duty casters, and uses tempered glass and polycarbonate. Available in standard colors: black, black granite, and two choices of woodgrain.

Showcase ES-33 (cabinet): This takes up less room and everything is accessible from the front. Features tempered glass on both monitor and marquee, removeable marquee, quick disconnect JAMMA harness, control panel swivels, and is available with optional subwoofer.

Also shown: A complete line of cabinets. Phone: (608)562-5558.

FUN MERCHANTS

Cosmic Crane (crane): Jumbo size crane for really big plush items. It comes in pastel cabinet with extra-large prize bay and double coin mechs.

Mega Crane (crane): New crane line shown in 24" and 34" one-player units. Features are the same as the Mega line.

Also shown: Big Choice, Candy Man, and Gift Box cranes. Phone: (800)524-2343.

FUN INDUSTRIES, INC.

Fun E Ball (vending): Interactive steering wheel helps to guide prize. Bright neon colors, prize every time, moving playfield parts, sound effects, programmable attract mode, bonus times, ticket option, and all-wood cabinet.

Also shown: Copy Cat, Steer Crazy, and Pop Fly. Phone (800) 747-1144.

FYD

Fantasy 5 (5-line): New line game with progressive jackpot and multiple bonuses.

Vegas-Style (cabinet): Cabinet made of wood and ABS plastic that looks like a metal casino cabinet but more economical.

Also shown: Triple Jack and Cherry Master. Phone: (615)758-4700

GAMEMAX

Cherry Master (8-line): Traditional Cherry Master game in an upright cabinet. (800)770-8890

GAMEVISION

Billiard Academy Real-Break (video): Billiard-themed video available in late October or early November. It shows rankings and scores.

The Legend of Silk Road (video): Fighting kit that features three characters (two male, one female) who fight against a variety of characters. Look for 10 rounds and 30 stages.

Zero Point (video): Competitive, non-violent gun game for one or two players with 52 different scenes and buy-in feature. Complete kit. Phone: (510)763-1191.

GLOBAL BILLIARDS

The Challenger (pool table): This model features classic styling and is available in black and mahogany finishes. Other models include the Pro, the Concorde, the Old Timer, the Buckingham, and the Windsor. All are designed to stand up to the toughest customers. Phone: (310)764-5000; Web site (www.globalbilliard.com).

GLOBAL GUMBALL

Wizard (bulk vendor): The Wizard comes in a variety of sizes including the 35" Mega Wizard, the 14" Wiz Kid, the Neon Wizard, the 27" Lil' Wizard, and the four-foot Candy Slide. Also comes with an optional triple stand for three units. Phone: (602)497-4364; Web site (www.globalgumball.com).

GREAT AMERICAN RECREATION

Beanbag Babies (crane): New crane available in three different size claws and three different size cabinets (28"-wide single, 34"-wide jumbo jr., and 48"-wide jumbo). Features include Molex plugs, tempered glass, adjustable running lights, and full sound package.

The Eagle (pool table): The company's flagship table with one-piece Italian slate, dual steel supports, hingled/locked table cleanout, and die-cast chrome corner castings.

Also shown: Action Soccer foosball table and Laser Hockey hockey game with neon day-glo top rail. Phone: (800)831-2100; Web site (www.greatamericanrec.com)

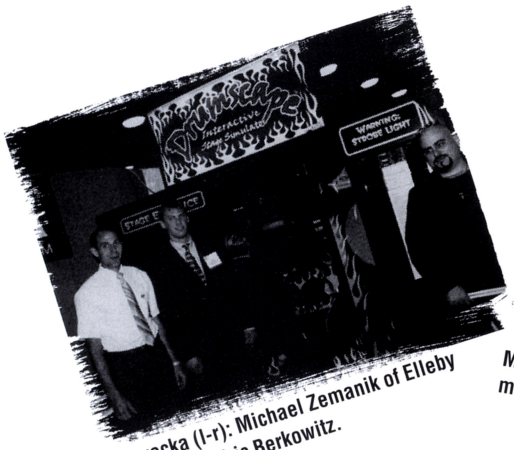
GREYSTONE TECHNOLOGY

XSG (video flight simulator): This dedicated unit lets the player sit in the cockpit of a futuristic ship and guide it through caverns and tunnels using a hip-side joystick. Includes weapons firing and race competition between linked players. Phone: (817) 284-0114; Web site (www.gstone.com).

Fun Merchants (l-r): Bill Seibert, Neal Rosenberg, and Brian Lampmann.

Imperial International (l-r): Steve Greishaber, Frank Fortunato, Paul Cardea, and George Montalvo.

Interactive Light (l-r): Fred Abadi, Stuart Wallock, Jeff Walker, Yoram Berkowitz, and Joseph Devtech.



Devecka (l-r): Michael Zemanik of Elleby Tech visits Eric Berkowitz.

MoneyLink (l-r): Matt Leone with Metro Amusements' Ray Shroyer.

Centaur International (l-r): Jeff Koonce (Amnet), Sarah Ferrier, Jeff Ferrier, and Dan Black (Amnet).

Sticker Inc. (l-r): Pre Paid Plus's Glenn Gielstra with Rheonna Palusa and Denis Ciers.

From left: Grand Products' Dave Marofske, Sega's Howell Ivy, and Deith's Simon Dieth.

Mazzco (l-r): Tim Kerr of Quartermaster, Bob Carlson of P&D, and Theresa Minarik.

From left: VGT's Jon Yarbrough and Jason Sprinkle with operators Jerry Carnes and Mons Hellyer.

From left: Roger Philpot, Jason McSorley, ESD's Bob Matthews, and Bill Hilty.

United Plush (l-r): Karen Yang, Bailey Cui, Frank Hou, and Peter Cui.

HAMILTON MFG.

Computer Disk Vendor (vending): This CDV unit dispenses 3.5" x 3.5" computer disks. It's small enough to mount on a tabletop or wall or for in-line banking with header and base kit.

Prepaid Phone Card Vendor (phone card vendor): Accepts $5, $10, and $20 bills and features electronic display, steel cabinet, electronic audit, self diagnostic indicator, and optional console base. Phone: (419)867-4858; Web site (www.hamiltonmfg. com).

INNOVATIVE CONCEPTS IN ENTERTAINMENT

Host Invaders (video): Available now as a kit or dedicated, Host Invaders is a gun game featuring recoiling pistols against monster-like enemies. Two players may destroy the enemy at the same time.

Frantic Fred (video redemption): It incorporates a steering wheel into game play for all ages. Players steer a bear so he can eat apples to win tickets.The cabinet is designed like a log cabin. Available for any world voltage and currency. Operator adjustable ticket payout.

Plush Bus (crane redemption): This all-metal crane makes real bus sounds and features flashing lights, styled to look like a bus. Available in joystick, joystick and buttons, or buttons only.

Hoop Fever (basketball game): Full size ball, stationary basket, no moving parts, and linking available for head-to-head competition.

Pirates Treasure (coin pusher): A one-player coin pusher with a theme suited for FECs.

Summer Time (coin pusher): A two-player coin pusher with a summer theme. Equipped with sound effects and music.

Also shown: Cobra Hunt. Phone: (716) 759-0370; Web site (www.icegame.com).

INCREDIBLE TECHNOLOGIES

Minitop (countertop): A specially designed bartop-style cabinet designed for Golden Tee 3D Golf. Features include complete controls with trackball, swivel base, 100-bill stacker, and coin mech and $1/$5 bill acceptor.

Virtual Pool (video): Two-player billiards-themed game (8-ball, 9-ball, straight pool, speed pool) with a new hardware system. Licensed from the PC home game and adapted for the arcade with advanced features such as eight 3D locations (scenes) and a season tour. Players can enter their names and come back to resume playing where they left off. Shipping in October.

Also shown: Golden Tee '98 and World Class Bowling Tournament Edition video. Phone: (847)870-7027; Web site (itsgames.com)

INTERACTIVE LIGHT

Kick-It (video simulator): Realistic soccer simulator where players kick a tethered soccer ball into a virtual goal as a 3D goalie blocks the kick. Features include Smart Beam sensor, 50" monitor, and real-time animation.

Kick-It Jr. (video simulator): Smaller version of Kick-It for younger children and locations that are tight on space. (800)213-3752; Web site (www.interactivelight.com)

JALECO USA, INC.

Arm Champs II (arm wrestling machine): This mechanical arm wrestling opponent offers nine levels of play with nine opponenets to beat and nine chances to earn points. Elbow pads, grip stick for players' left hands, and a step-up steel deck add to this game's atrractiveness.

Stamp Magic (stamp vending machine): Stamp Magic features full two-camera composite function. Makes self-inking stamps in a variety of colors. Combines user's picture with a background of their choice.

Match Three 3 (redemption): New redemption game featuring colorful "cool cats" on game and side panels. Match any two and win; match any three and win more. Operator adjustable.

World PK Soccer V2 (soccer game): New design on the original World PK Soccer features new "miracle league" with robot keeper, three kicker types, nine types of "super shots" with special path and visual effects, and improved durability of cabinet. Phone: (708) 215-1811.

J-S SALES CO.

Sam Billiards (pool table): Solid frame construction using phenolic plywood, Formica-clad cabinet, one-step pricing, magnetic cue ball system, and diamond honed one-piece slate. Phone: (914)668-8051.

JVL

Concorde 2 (countertop): Fifty-four game unit with all-new SVGA graphics and animation. Now locations can set, calibrate, and change the volume, also adjust the adult game levels and do advertising screens without opening the game. A separate disc for tournament play on the XXX games is available through distributors. Phone: (800)296-6657; Web site (www.jvl-ent.com)

KEVIN SHARP

Fantasy Fone Card Sweepstakes Machine (specialty): Self-contained machine that uses promotional sweepstakes to sell phone cards. It features a reloadable computer cartridge; when it's empty, send it back to the company to be refilled. Graphics can be changed every time the pin cartridge is reloaded. A kit is coming that will convert existing 8-line games to the Fantasy Fone Card.

Mystery Jackpot Bonus (8-line): A new Dyna board that has a continuous spin feature, skill-stop, and jackpot pool. Coming soon: Skill '98 8-line and Desert Storm reel machine that dispenses tokens or tickets. Phone: (800)624-3779)

KIDDIE'S MFG.

Harley-Davidson (kiddie ride): The most famous of all motorcycles is now the right size for youngsters. Kids will love the attract mode with flashing lights and periodic revving

Game Vision (l-r): David Gupta and Dean Kim.

GameMax (l-r): Michael Young, Frank Azzurro, and David Young.

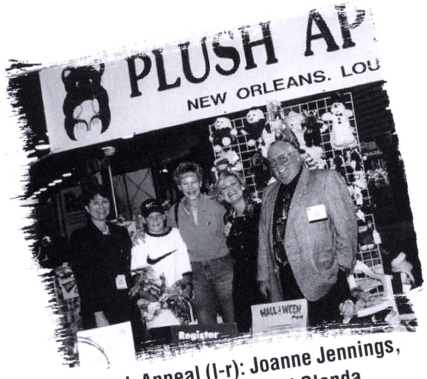
From left: Bentler's Doug Antenan, Charles Bentler, and Jim McGel with Variety Specialty's Pat Prather.

From left: Fun Co.'s Tom Isaacson, Don Teske, and Bob Stremcha with Lektron's Greg Mitchell and Larry Easter.

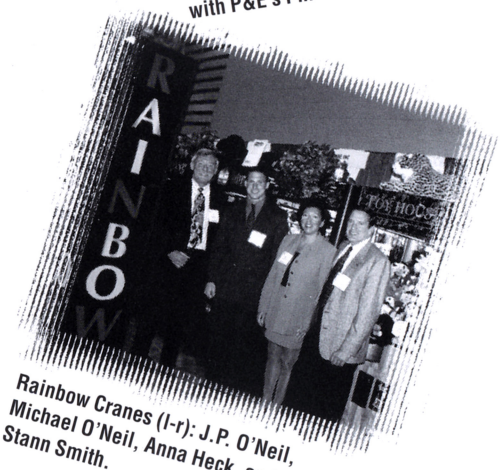
Kevin Sharp (l-r): Tim Newhouse, Jason Denton, Kevin Sharp, Annette Sharp, and Charles Smile.

Great American Recreation: Bob Keelyn with P&E's Phil Cornick.

Oriental Trading (l-r): Cris Millar and Aaron Graves show off funny teeth.



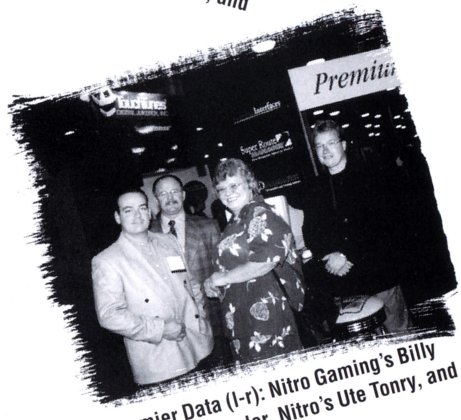
Plush Appeal (l-r): Joanne Jennings, Korey Kraayenbrink and Glenda Kraayenbrink, Catherine Fletchinger, and Wally Ewing of Mid-West Coin.



Rainbow Cranes (l-r): J.P. O'Neil, Michael O'Neil, Anna Heck, and Stann Smith.

Ardac (l-r): Warren Udisky, Sharon Taylor, and Don Knauf.

Hoffman Mint (l-r): Al Sterling and Michael Hoffman.



Premier Data (l-r): Nitro Gaming's Billy Allen, Tom Fowler, Nitro's Ute Tonry, and Al Gietl.

of the engine. A key feature is the interactive throttle.

X-Men (kiddie ride): The super heroes are now an interactive kiddie ride. Included are high-tech features like interactive joysticks and buttons, each emitting a different sound. Phone: (847)550-6564.

KIDDIE RIDE ENTERPRISES

Sesame Street Rides (kiddie rides): Licensed kiddie rides including the Big Bird Jetways, Bert & Ernie's Fire Engine, and Elmo & Joe's EZ Riders. Phone: (800)858-7433

KIDDIE RIDES USA

Major League Baseball (kiddie ride): This ride is shaped like an oversized baseball and features a baseball cap on top. Any professional baseball team's logo can be put on the ride. Features durable construction.

Also shown: Gumball Machine, Mister Potato Head Car, Tonka Truck, and the Cadillac Car. Phone: (303) 399-8144; Web site (www.kiddieridesusa.com).

KONAMI

NBA Play by Play (video): This almost-ready video will be shipped in kit and dedicated configurations. Four players can compete against one another. Almost all teams are represented in this brand new basketball sports game.

Fisherman's Bait (video): The objective is to catch as many bass as possible to extend fishing time. This kit allows players to choose from three levels of play, change the weather, time of day, and bait. After you cast, you can adjust the tension of the line with the cast switch.

Teraburst (video): Two players can shoot alien creatures with machine gun-like weaponry in the year 2017. Missions take players through four stages and explosive sounds continuously punctuate game play.

HipHopMania 2nd Mix (video): This dedicated game employs a turntable and button control panel with which players make the appropriate sounds at the right time. If your rhythm level is good, your groove level stays high. Features a practice stage, as well as musical categories reggae, hip-hop, rap, techno, ska, rave, and soul.

Steering Champ (video): Two-player game featuring more than 17 games in one cabinet. Each time players complete a stage, they move on to the next game. Continuation available. Screen provides instructions before each game.

Racing Jam (driving simulator): Select from 18 cars. Choice of 13 different courses and of skill levels within each course. Adjustable car settings, such as tires, engine power, and suspension. Graphics by COBRA system. Day or night driving.

Also shown: Hyper Bishi Bashi Champ and Photo Friends. Phone: (847)215-5100; Web site (www.konami.com).

LAZER-TRON

Arcade PC System (video): Lazer-Tron joins with Opus Entertainment and LBE systems to bring PC game titles to coin-op with additions suited to arcade play. Tournament and prize features will be included; games will be available dedicated and in legacy kit or software kit form. The first games are: Quake Arcade Tournament Edition: Quake ATE is linkable up to eight at the present time, unlimited later. It has tournament play and the popular death match; and Actua Soccer: A a one- or two-player upright with real soccer action. Both games come dedicated or kit. The next title will be Crazy Bus, set for November release, followed by Cardinal Syn and The Reap, both shipping in December.

Fire Stomper (bop/stomp): Players try to stomp out the fire balls from a friendly Medieval dragon using both their hands and feet. Speed is adjustable and there is a special bonus for high score. The game tallies hits and misses to determine ticket payout.

Video Redemption System (redemption): An upright cabinet system with high-resolution 27" monitor that allows constant rotation of CD-ROM games. Multiple units can be linked to a bonus jackpot. Eight titles are available including the new Slugger's Alley and Spin Streak. Others are Chip Away, Slide Master, Solar Spin, Miner's Revenge, Hoppin Harry, and Prize Bowl. The Instaprize feature will be available on these and all Lazer-Tron games.

Slugger's Alley (redemption): The old metal ball and bat game with mechanical men turned into a VRS game. Get as many hits and RBIs as possible to score maximum points.

Spin Streak (redemption): Skill-stop for the VRS that involves a rotating light and matching symbols in a variety of directions. Line up three and win tickets. Inspired by Match Em Up.

Also shown: Match Em Up electromechanical game in both sports and gaming versions, Dino Games children's ball-toss game, and Prize Zone in upright and countertop. Phone: (925)460-0873; Web site (www.lazertron.com)

LEISURE ENTERTAINMENT

Joker Poker 2000 (video poker): The latest version designed to take you into the new century. Phone: (516)593-5050.

MALA INTERNATIONAL

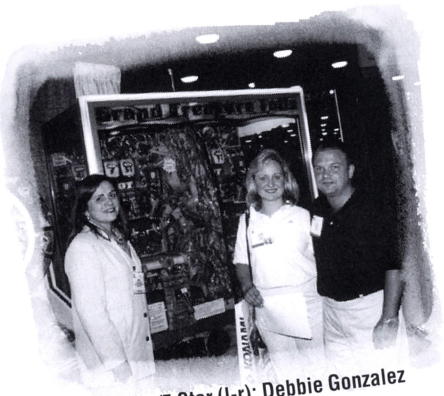
Commercial Slope (foosball): Features two-piece construction with internal score keeper and coin mech for an ESD chute adapter. Other models available include Scorpion II in black or mahogany, Country Pine, and Scorpion I in Oak or black. Phone: (705)437-1133.

MAYONI

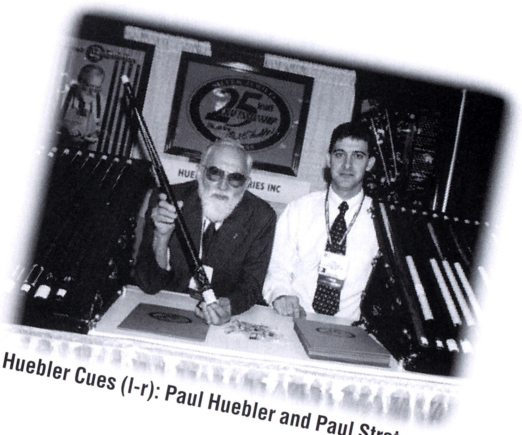
InstaBrush (toothbrush dispenser): This machine is part of Mayoni's Convenience Disposable Products division. It comes in Alpine white and vends 38 toothbrushes at 75 cents each. Cost is under $200.

Also shown: Mayoni's line of impulse machines, Compuscale, Big Top mini Pinball, and other vending units such as DinoVend, Sergeant

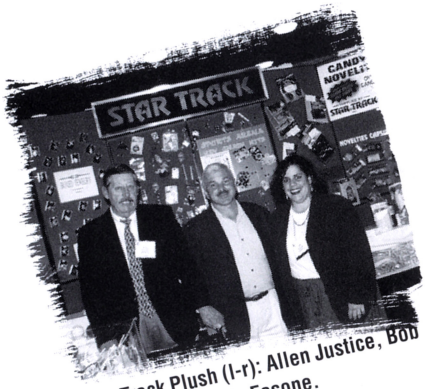
Fun Industries (l-r): Mel LaForce with Impact House's Bert Baughmann and Marilyn Sheppard.



Planet Earth/5 Star (l-r): Debbie Gonzalez and Laura and Van Black of Amnet.



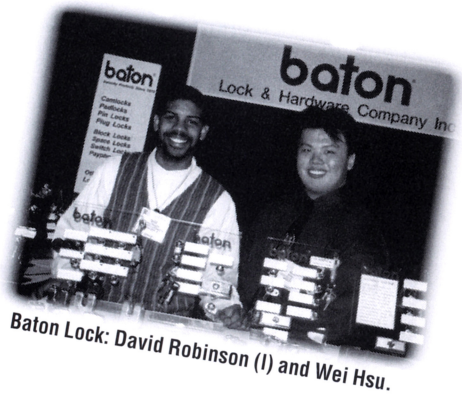
Huebler Cues (l-r): Paul Huebler and Paul Stratman.



Star Track Plush (l-r): Allen Justice, Bob Ingento, and Cindy Fasone.

D&R Industries (l-r): Rhona and Richard Barnes of Middle Tennesse Dist., and Lynndon Ruber.

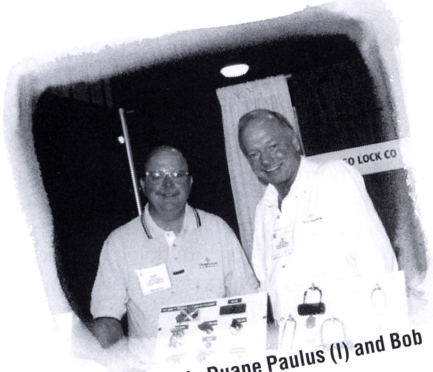
Scan Coin (l-r): Steve Kehrer of Lucky Coin Machine, Per Lundin, and Sharon Fox of ABC Coin.



Baton Lock: David Robinson (l) and Wei Hsu.

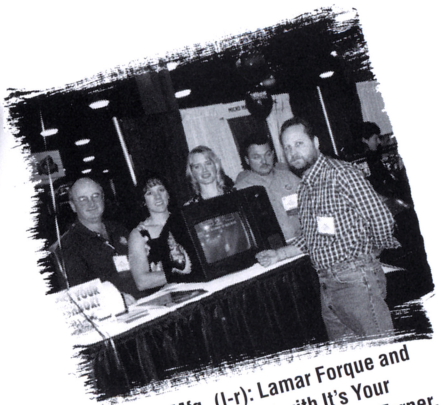
Kiddie's Mfg. (l-r): Doug Shipley, B&B Music's Michelle and Evan Brown, and Vendor's Exchange's Brent Garson.

BRW: John Miner (l) and Thomas Janeway.



Chicago Lock: Duane Paulus (l) and Bob Lovell.

Play-By-Play/Ace Acme (l-r): Stephen Chernin and Mark Gawlik.



Micro Mfg. (l-r): Lamar Forque and Kendra Robichaud with It's Your Quarter's Juli Sloter and Jack Turner.

Major, and Zord. Phone: (800)803-9160.

MCGREGOR ENTERPRISES

Poker Palace (card/line game): New PC-based touch screen poker with multigames (poker, 8-line, keno), ticket dispenser and printer, and options.

Also shown: video pokers, coin pushers,and a three-player blackjack. Phone: (888)706-0539

MERIT INDUSTRIES

Megatouch XL 6000 (countertop): Newest in the Megatouch line, with all-new graphics and new games such as Tennis Ace, Double Solitaire, and Trip Flip. There are 60 CD-ROM games in all. Also in upright cabinet.

Megatouch Millennium (countertop): Available in early January, it features a new futuristic cabinet (also upright) in a variety of colors, Pentium-class CPU, top-mounted coin entries, promotions management system, and new menu system. A golf game will be in the mix.

Sniper (darts): Coming in mid-October, a new combat game that can be added to the Scorpion DX, downloaded from Merit's Web site. Now all league monies (dues) can be put into the game and will log in back at the office. A Sniper kit is slated for all Merit 9000 games next year.

Also shown: Scorpion darts (9000 and DX). Phone: (800)523-2760; Web site (www.meritind.com)

METRO GAMES

System 98 (countertop): Brand new games, 15" monitor, trackball and joypad controls, touch screen option. Phone: (630)572-1268.

MICRO MFG.

Global Touch HD Plus 2 (countertop): The all new countertop features full motion video allowing you to see, for example, a mini movie on the Poker Strip Show. More fun games include Zoomoree, Wizard Trivia, and Mystic Games.

Also Shown: Line of video pokers including Berry Bonus, Classic Poker, and Turbo Poker II. Phone: (615)793-5510.

MIDWAY MFG.

NFL Blitz '99 (video): One to four players show their talents on the football field with lots of extra features in this sequel to one of the most popular games from last year. Players create, personalize, and store their own plays. With an N64 controller pack, they can even design plays at home and bring them back to the arcade stadium.

TouchMaster 5000 (countertop): There are four brand new games including the long-awaited trivia and a dozen updated games such as strip poker and double take. Players can also choose from 32 original games like Centipede and Breakout 3000.

CarnEvil (video): This had showgoers talking. If you can survive the more than 40 kinds of phobia-inducing characters that want to make you a permanent fixture in their ghoulish gallery, the it's on to the Big Top, where only the fiercest of freaks reside. Available in 25- or 39" cabinet. Phone: (773)961-1000; Web site (www.midway.com).

NAMCO

Jackpot (coin pusher): One-player redemption game with seven skill coin slots, new coin delivery system for playing up to 49 coins at a time, and three ticket dispensers.

Panic Park (novelty): Two-player novelty game where players can crash into each other. Guaranteed to elicit smiles.

Time Crisis II (video): Gun game now available in a street-ready cabinet with extra hasp over the coin door and cash box. Available in November, it can be a single player or link up to eight.

Also shown: Flick Derby multiplayer game now with pinball flippers used to propel the balls, and Soul Calibur 3D fighting-themed video. Phone: (630)238-2248; Web site (www.namco.com)

NATIONAL ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGIES

VideoNET (Internet): This unit offers online communication and entertainment on a currency-operated Internet terminal. It offers games, video mail, e-mail, chat rooms, and lots of links. Phone: (506)847-4969; Web site (www.natel.ca).

NOEL

LAX Jr. (rotary merchandiser): This single player automatically dispenses any item that will fit into the 3-1/2" tray. Phone: (800)234-8729.

NSM

Midnight Sapphire (jukebox): Features a wide-view 16-jacket display that allows patrons to view selections. CDs are cradled in individual trays and are not directly handled . Easy access components located on the backside. Options include wireless remote control, field service kits, and remote speakers.

Also shown: Gemfire wall unit jukebox and the original Sapphire. Phone: (630) 860-5100.

O.K. MFG.

Kinetic Kid (bulk vendor): Kids will gravitate towards the gumballs, chasing rope lights, tempting sounds, and it requires no electricity.

Also shown: The Road Runner series of gumball vendors. Phone: (801)974-9116.

PENINSULA VENDING, INC.

Sticker and Tattoo Vending Machine: Vends new NFL 3D stickers of helmets of all teams Also vends other stickers and tattoos as displayed on the machine itself.

Also shown: six colum combo sticker machine with double tiered stand with a capsule vending machine also on the stand and a four column sticker machine on an individual stand. Phone: (408) 978-3588.

QUARTERMASTER

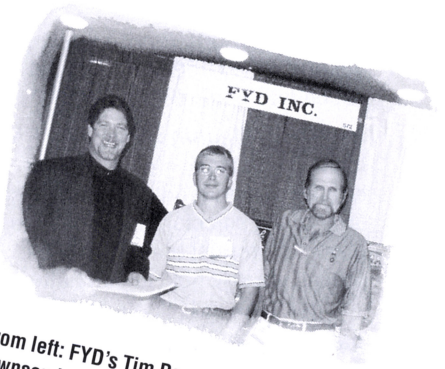
Lucky Touch (card/line game): Includes 14 games in a touch screen unit—pokers, blackjack, bingo,

Jukebox Services (l-r): Ed Fedorchak, Mike Smith, and Sam Atchley.

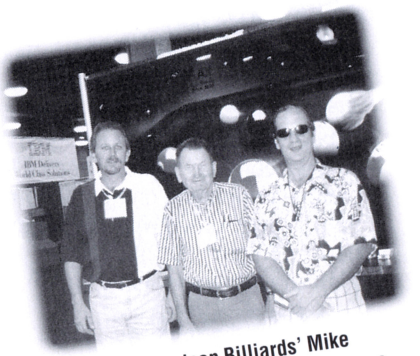
Lazer-Tron (l-r): John Myers of Dragon Lord, Tom Godfrey of Family Fun Center, Matt Kelly, and Norm Petermeier.

Plush-4-Play (l-r): Alex and Georgia Cornett, Roland Elledge, and Ty Bishop.

From left: McGregor's Brian McGregor and Rob Lambeth with Central Amusements' Gary Stracer.



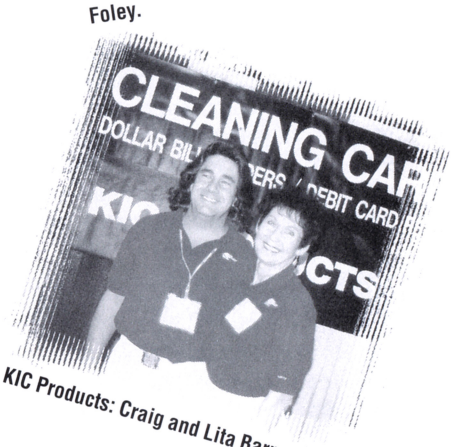
From left: FYD's Tim Peach with Charles Townsend and Mershon Townsend.



From left: Robertson Billiards' Mike Knox and Charlie Robertson with James Foley.

From left: Worlds of Games' Chuck Heflin, Sheri Heflin, and Keith Heflin with distributors Bob Piece and Donnie Hanes.

LAI (l-r): Frank Minella with Dock and Betty Ringo.



KIC Products: Craig and Lita Barry.

ATM Distributing (l-r): Wes Lowe, Robyn Downey, and Joe McNally.

Scott Cook of Quartermaster showed Leisure Entertainments' new *Joker Master 2000*.

Electromatic International (l-r): Luc Marcoux with Annie Gingras.

keno, reel games, and more. Available in upright, countertop, or high chrome cabinet. comes with ticket printer, ticket dispenser, or coin/token hopper.

Skill Touch (5-line): Features two five-reel games of skill—Wild Twos that plays like Deuces Wild 5-Card Draw, and Elevens-or-Better that plays like Jacks-or-Better 5-Card Draw. Phone: (800)955-9681

RADAR SALES

Fastball (interactive pitching): Take the popular midway game indoors. Players pitch six balls and attempt to beat the fastest speed of the day. Players can also strike out or walk batters, depending on how accurate they throw. Comes with a ticket dispenser. Phone: (612)533-1100; Web site (www.radarsales.com).

RAINBOW GAMES

End of the Rainbow (coin pusher): Billed as the next generation of coin pushers, this unit has enhanced skill ability on wheels, unbreakable tempered glass, full engagement with each coin, improved coin acceptor, secure locking system, choice of colors, token in/token out option, brilliant lighting, and adjustable payout percentages. Phone: (606)862-0605.

RAINBOW CRANES

Toy House, Animal House, and Fun House (cranes): All three models come in a selection of sizes from 24" to 60". Choose from classic, contemporary, and neon series exteriors. Many outstanding features. Phone: (619)748-7157; Web site (www.rainbowcrane.com).

ROBINSON KIDDIE RIDES

Mark Martin #6 Car (kiddie ride): Officially licensed by Roush Racing this car is gel-coated, with electronic sounds, direct drive Boston gear reducer, and reasonably priced. Phone: (606)864-8809.

R-O INTERNATIONAL

Cold Can (drink vendor): Features instant vending, multiple pricing, jam-free loading, powder coating, and zone cooling with a superior compressor.

Can/Bottle (drink vendor): This model dispenses water, soda, or sport drinks with or without sport caps and/or your favorite can product. Features a unique modular design.

Bulk Vendor: Vend up to six choices. Features electronic pricing, double door construction, giant capacity, and adjustable racks.

Orelda (vendor): Vends a serving of hot and crispy french fries in just 45 seconds. Phone: (630)582-1561.

2-4-1 Pop Machine (vending): Prototype cold drink vendor that features green and red lights that flash around the selector buttons. If you push the product button while the green light is lit next to that button, you get a free additional soda.

Fever Chance (children's game): Reel-type redemption game that asks players to line up frogs wearing sombreros to win tickets (50 tickets max, one guaranteed for each play). There is a second chance to win added tickets.

ROCK-OLA

Corvette 8000 (jukebox): Like its predecessor, the Intrigue 8000, this large new floor model features a wide glass front through which users may view 22 CD play lists (out of 100) at a time. Chevrolet Corvette imagery and stylings add to the attractiveness of an already handsome model.

Chevrolet Corvette (jukebox): Classic nostalgic jukebox featuring vintage corvette graphics. Features quality woods, four bubble tubes, motor-driven color cylinders, and die-cast metal trim. Also 100-CD capacity, dual amplifiers, surround sound, 810 watts of music power, and a Phillips compact disc player with automatic disc mapping and self-adjusting laser. Remote control optional.

Also shown: Harley Legend, Harley Live to Ride, Intrigue 8000, Bubbler, Gazelle, Peacock, and Betty Boop. Phone: (310) 328-1306; Web site (www.rock-ola.com).

ROWE/AMI

LaserStar Encore (CD floor jukebox): Features a new title rack display with 16 CD jackets and titles visible at a glance. Capacity of 100 CDs. Three-channel surround sound capability. Compatible for CDG, CDV, Karaoke or modem. Equipped with bill acceptor. Total of 250 watts.

The Sunrise (CD wall jukebox): Small size, 6 CD jacket display, neon lights, accepts coins and bills, seven band eqalizer, thre-channel surround sound capability, and modem compatible for data retrieval.

The Starburst (CD wall jukebox): Small size, 6 CD jacket display, neon lights, accepts coins and bills, seven band eqalizer, three-channel surround sound capability, and modem compatible for data retrieval.

The Starburst (CD floor jukebox): Twelve CD jackets are displayed. Pages flip vertically. 100 CD capacity. "attract mode" turns CDs automatically. Autoplay, remote control, printer and modem, and karaoke options. Tan or black.

Also shown: Berkeley and Nostalgia. Phone: (616) 243-3633; Web site (www.rowe/ami.com).

SNK

Warriors Rage (video): This follow up to Samurai Shodown 64 is for the Hyper Neo-Geo 64 system. It features plenty of action with 32 fighters.

Beast Busters, the Second Nightmare (video): For the Hyper Neo-Geo 64 gun platform, the gun features a built-in speaker for realistic sounds and a vibrator motor for recoil feedback for added realism.

Also shown: Xtreme Rally for Hyper Neo-Geo 64 and The King of Fighters for the original Neo-Geo. Phone: (408)292-4550; Web site (snkusa.com).

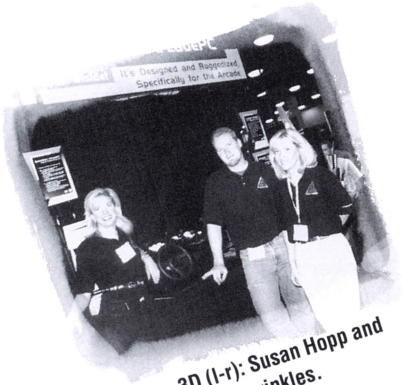
SAMMY USA

Sports Arena (redemption): Sammy's popular prize redemption game is now going to earn even more with the new prizes available through Sammy's new catalog. An example of kits is the NASCAR kit

Cadillac Jack (l-r): John Medlin, Michelle Kanalos, Mike Macke, John Taylor, and Silas Lewis.

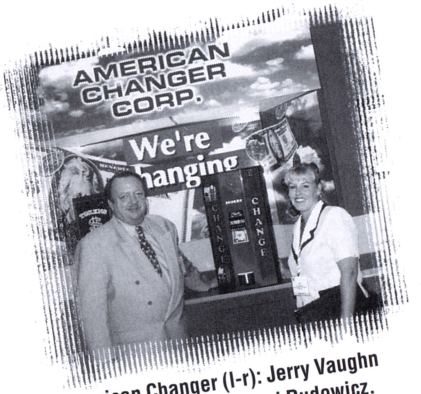
AstroSystems (l-r): *Play Meter's* Carol Ann Lally-Longacre, and Carol Lally visit Wendy Kazel.

National Electronic Technology (l-r): Csaba Domokos, Cliff Godsoe, Norman Mazerollo, and Graeme MacKinnon.



Quantum 3D (l-r): Susan Hopp and Steve and Sara Sprinkles.

LA East (l-r): Sherry Rizzo and Eileen Schembri.

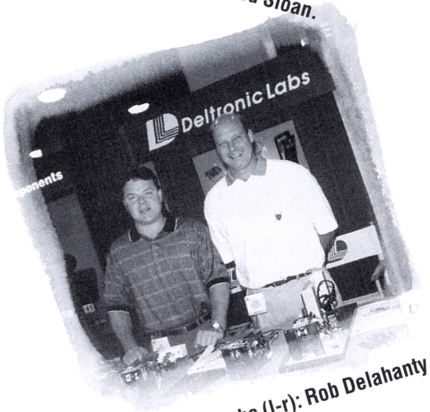


American Changer (l-r): Jerry Vaughn with Wells-Gardner's Lori Rudowicz.

Bob's Space Racers (l-r): CEC Entertainment's Thomas Ward with Ted Sloan.

National Ticket Co. (l-r): Thomas Ritz with Ester Vidot.

HMS Monaco's booth with a full house.



Deltronic Labs (l-r): Rob Delahanty and Stephen Horniak.

Diamond Games (l-r): Gunther Kotzman, Jay Wendl, and Don Louden.

TouchTunes (l-r): John Margold, Nikki Fujinaka, Jim Kelly, Karen Tobin, Linda Komorsky, Tony Mastronardi, and Dan Clarton.

including jerseys, cars, helmets, etc. Lots of other prizes available through the catalog. Phone: (847)364-9787; Web site (www.sammyusa.com).

SAVAGE

Savage Speed Ball (table game): This digital cue sport game is played on a normal sized pool table, but it's off-white, the cloth is purple, and the corners are rounded with a silver capping. There are 10 balls: eight yellow, one red, and two white. After breaking the balls, set the timer, and try to pocket all the yellow balls, the red one, and then the white cue ball in either center pocket. Phone: (61) 8 8395 3600.

SEGA ENTERPRISES, INC. (U.S.A.)

The Ocean Hunter (video): Underwater adventure against monsters. Graphics produced by Sega's model 3 step 2 technology. Two player cooperative gameplay. Seven seas to explore. Bench style seating on deluxe unit. Also in cabinet unit.

Spikeout (video): Cooperative fighting challenge in streets scenes. Four one-player cabinets can be linked to allow all four to fight together against a common enemy. Joystick and button controls. Multiple power ups and weapons in each scenario. Giant speakers (Sega Headwave Speaker System) attached to a steel mesh can enhance players' experience. Requires medium resolution monitor.

Get Bass (fishing simulator): Model 3 3D fishing simulator. Dedicated or cabinet, this game allows player to hold rod contoller, recreating the feeling of an actual rod hooking a fish. 24 different breed of fish. Three courses available. Acquatic sound effects.

Daytona 2 USA (driving simulator): Link up to 16 machines through a dedicated network. Sound effects sampled from real race cars. Steering wheel jerks through collisions and hard turns. Three car types, three courses, and three race modes available.

The Lost World Jurrasic Park (video): This cabinet model of the shooting game employs model 3 3D technology. 50" medium resolution monitor. Two power bar options. 14 dinosaurs. Two-player option.

Star Wars Trilogy (video): Deluxe cockpit or cabinet models available late fall. Model 3 shooting game in which players ride, fly, and shoot while on board futuristic vehicles. Three stages, hidden secrets, and joystick control.

Also shown: Dynamite Cop. Phone: (650) 802-3100; Web site (www.sega.com).

SEGA PINBALL, INC.

Godzilla (pinball): Giant size head of Godzilla bursts out of the play field, large ramps, challenging rules. High scorers enter initials.

Austin Powers (redemption): Brightly colored unit displays the movie's characters. Black light art package. Large button operates the wheel of Powers.

Also shown: Udderly Tickets, Wack a Doodle Doo, and Cut the Cheese. Phone: (708) 345-7700.

SHARP IMAGE

Wild Fire (pull tab): This video multi-game, pull-tab playback machine gives customers paper pull-tabs while showing the results displayed on a video monitor. Players choose from 10 different game titles and four game types like Keno or poker. Phone: (818)341-8900.

SIM MATRIX

VR PC Racer (cabinet): Prototype cabinet that is a NANI, public PC, Intel OAA modular racing package that can have multiple titles and hardware options for growth. It will be compatible with all PC-based racing titles. The company is working with IBM. Game shown: the consumer product Need for Speed II SE. Phone: (949)552-7801.

SKEE BALL

Demolition Zone (redemption): Players demolish a three dimensional building in an allotted time by hitting flashing buttons on a control panel as they light up. Sound effects and lights. Phone: (215) 997-8900; Web site (www.skeeball.com).

SMART INDUSTRIES

Bean Bag Buddies (crane): Modular construction crane for those popular beanie babies. It comes in three widths: 24", 26", and 34". Now available as a conversion kit for candy cranes.

Also shown: Prize Circus prize vendor that handles both large and small items, the Smart Ticket Center, and the full line of Clean Sweep cranes and Bear Claw cranes. (800)553-2442; Web site (www.smartind.com)

STICKER INC.

Sticker Player Defined colors and durable cabinet. Zoom feature. User can select a background against which their picture appears. Choice of screen position. Two sticker sizes. New settings by CD-ROM. Phone: (908) 604-6730.

STANDARD CHANGE-MAKERS

Economy series (changers): This series of front load economy changers includes the EC200 with header and base, with base only, the "Trendy" model with header and base, and "Trendy" with base only; and the EC100 with header and base or with base only. Phone: (317)899-6966

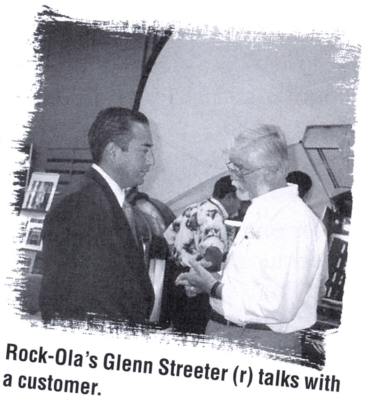
STRATEGIC INNOVATION

Sports Blaster (bulk vendor): This adorable game combines gumballs and pinball. Players blast the goal and win a free second gumball. Features interchangeable playing surfaces and needs no electricity. Phone: (888)757-2738.

THEISEN VENDING

Garfield (kiddie ride): Single seat ride with the biggest orange Garfield character ever seen. From Jolly Roger Amusement Rides Ltd.

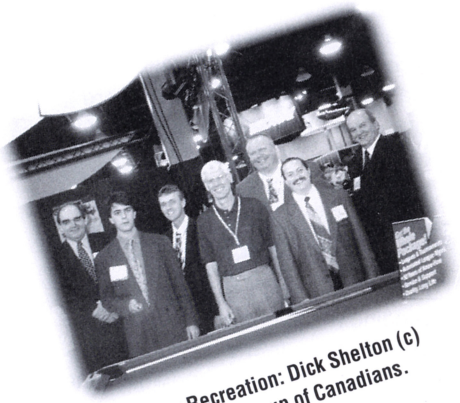
Pink Panther Train (kiddie ride): Another licensed character ride from Jolly Roger, this one featuring the Pink Panther and Inspector Clouseau. It has classic Henry



Rock-Ola's Glenn Streeter (r) talks with a customer.

Wurlitzer: Jerry Reeves (l) and Rod Stebelton.

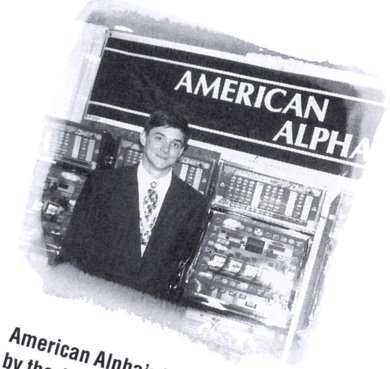
Howard Cole (l) and Chris Warren with the Rowe dancers.



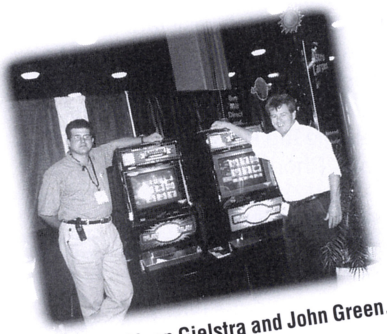
Valley Recreation: Dick Shelton (c) welcomes a group of Canadians.

NSM (l-r): Keith White and John Tracy with George Sammons and Charles Fite.

Greg Laughlin (l) with JC Pacific's Howard Wu.



American Alpha's Kenneth Haag by the *Desert Storm* game.



BGI (l-r): Glenn Gielstra and John Green.

C.T.W.H. (l-r): Sandy McIntyre with daughters Kelly and Andrea.

Merit Industries: Jim Roe (l) and Ray Galante of Music- Vend.

Atari Games (l-r): Mike LeCroix of Vend Alaska and Jackie Cook.

Incredible Technologies: Bob Graves (l) of Mazzco and Scott Morrison.

Mancini theme music, whistle sounds, and flashing lights.

Also shown: Little Monsters School Bus, NASA Shuttle, Safari Jeep, Woody Woodpecker Fire Truck, Mighty Mouse Space Rocket, American Roadster, Police Helicopter, and Ice Cream Van.Phone: (800)633-3436.

TOUCHTUNES

Digital Downloading Jukebox 750 songs preloaded in jukebox. Download three additional songs and artwork each week at no extra charge. Five-year warranty. Remote control, MARS 2000 series DBA with 750 note stacker, two detachable speakers, auxiliary line out for third zone. 17" touchscreen monitor, Intel processor, hard drive, modem. Operator can order music from the display screen itself. Manufactured by Bose. Compatible with all commercially available speakers. Phone: (888) 338-JUKE.

UNIVERSAL JUKEBOX

Odyssey and Oasis (jukeboxes): Features the same inside specifications as the Mercury and Gold. Easy to load, automated flip page title display, easy to use modular mechanism holds up to 102 CDs. Enhanced audit memory logic.

Also shown: Mercury, Big sound, Gold, Classic. Phone: 52 3 627 3232 in Mexico.

VALLEY RECREATION PRODUCTS

Cougar 8 (dart game): Provides for time-limit games in which players shoot as many darts as they can in an allotted time. Auto adjust after each round of players' time handicaps. Split score allows for a nine round game featuring a different target each round. Fanless power supply.

ZD-7 (pool table): Polished, buffed chrome atop nickel and chrome plating, light wood grain finish, one-piece ball collector, diamond markers, interchangeable components, adjustable coin slot.

Also shown: Cougar IQ, the Cat, Big Cat (pool tables), Tornado 1000 and Tornado 2000 (foosball tables). Phone: (800) 248-2837.

VENTURE ENTERTAINMENT

Lit'l Maverick (bumper pool): Features include a slate top, works in the drawer, adjustable coin chute, plywood cabinet, poplar top frame and rails, casted corners, metal trim molding, and optional colors. Also available in non-coin-operated.

The Maverick (pool table): Features include 3/4" plywood construction, triple plated die cast top corners, one piece ball return, precision ground slate, bottom hatch door, price adjustable push chute coin mech, interchangeable parts with competitors.

Bronco (pool table): A new-style table with a front that has a 9-ball rack divider. It has the same features as the Maverick and comes in a variety of finishes (fusion maple was on display).

The Eagle (shuffleboard): Features include a maple top, wood frame, burn and scratch resistant Mica laminate, solid wood legs, climatic adjusters, and standard accessories. Come in three sizes. Also available the Royal 2000 shuffleboard. Phone: (732)341-2524.

VIDEO GAMING TECHNOLOGIES

Vegas Blackjack (video card game): Three players can play simultaneously. Auto play feature suggests moves to players based on conventional blackjack strategies. Voice instructions. Graphics and Vegas-style chaser lights. Padded arm rests and foot rests.

Bonus 777's Jackpot (video card game): Four ways to win and two progressive jackpots. Three players can play simultaneously. Auto play feature suggests moves to players based on conventional blackjack strategies. Voice instructions. Graphics and Vegas-style chaser lights. Padded arm rests and foot rests.

Treasure Quest (video card game): Touch screen gaming, 3D HI-RES graphics, and CD sound effects. Games include Anything Wild, Pieces of 8, and Lucky 7's. Phone: (800) 961-2228.

WILLIAMS ELECTRONICS

Monster Bash (pinball): The show of the centuries is about to begin. Rebuild Frankenstein and he'll jump off his slab ready to jam on his keyboard. If you can dig out the Mummy, he'll dust himself off and plug in his bass. Wolfman is just howling to pick up his drumsticks, and spell out "Dracula" and the coolest vampire is ready to sink his teeth into a mean guitar riff. And there's more characters ready to rock. Phone: (773)961-1000; Web site (www.wms.com).

WORLD OF GAMES

Free Spin and Free Draw (card vending machines): Easy loading, uses most multi line boards, and has player appeal. Standing cabinet allows for easy viewing and play. Phone: (931)684-4841; Web site (www.worldsofgameslic.com).

WURLITZER

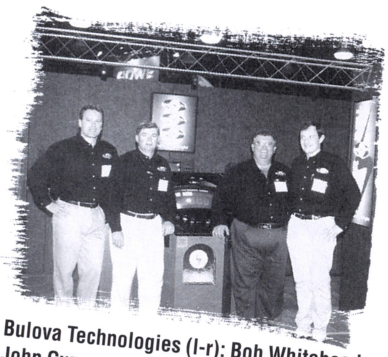
Princess (jukebox): This is a miniature of the One More Time, Wurlitzer's nostalgic remake of the legendary 1015. This wall-mount unit comes in the traditional wood cabinet or in black with an optional stand.

Rave On (jukebox): This colorful unit features a full CD library displayed in less than 10 seconds, three rotating panels that display about 200 tracks, four album cover spaces for special advertising, eye catching moving color bands, four matched internal speakers, programmable play stimulator, and EZ connections for microphone or external speakers.

Also shown: The Rainbow and the One More Time. Phone: (201)807-2616; Web site (www.wurlitzer-jukebox.com).

ZAMPERLA

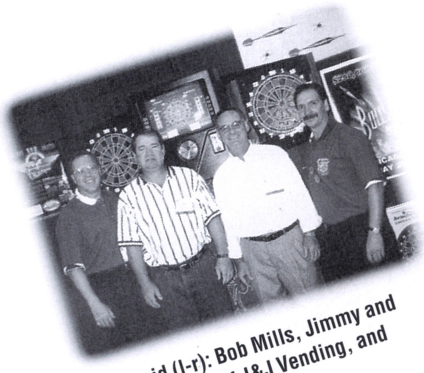
Sportster (kiddie ride): Kids will beg to ride their own version of the famous motorcycles. Phone: (973)334-8133. ▲



Bulova Technologies (l-r): Bob Whitehead, John Gwynn, Steve Gurba and Peter Palzer.

Sammy USA (l-r): Rick Rochetti, Laurie Jezuit, David Cane, and Maria Fotinopoulos.

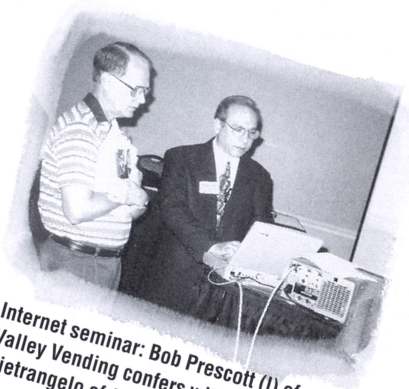
BestCo.: Bob Martin (l) and Cris Criscola.



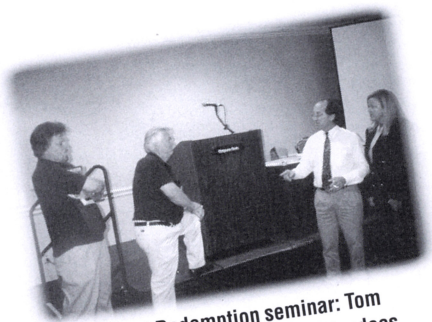
Arachnid (l-r): Bob Mills, Jimmy and Dickey Martin of J&J Vending, and Warren Morgan.

Konami: Players line up for *Fisherman's Bait.*

Marc Mandeltort (l) of Marco Specialties and Marty Murin of Rainbow Falls Video Service.



Internet seminar: Bob Prescott (l) of Valley Vending confers with Jim Pietrangelo of AMA Dist.



Amusement Redemption seminar: Tom Fricke of *Play Meter* talks with attendees.

Smart Industries: John Lewis (l) of A&A Sales & Service and Mike Smith.

Venture Entertainment (l-r): Russell McKay, Bob Chapman, Sol Lipkin, and Richard Swenhaugen.

Midway Mfg. (l-r): Tom Cahill, Lucy Varela, Greg McKay, and Sonny Corona.

From left: West Virginians Dee Gardener, Leoma Ballard, and Aretta McCarus.

ANNUAL business meeting:

time for new strategies

A newly streamlined AMOA organization is ready to take its members into the next century.

The Hesch family, (l-r): Chris and Diane Hesch, Alice Hesch, Linda and Donna Hesch, Craig Hesch, Sue and Don Hesch, Mrs. Isabel Hesch, Mark and Diane Hesch, and Mike and Carol Steurer.

After the recent major shift in management from the firm of Smith, Bucklin to a self-sustained AMOA office, the future is full of challenges and opportunities.

Howard Cole of Cole Vending put it this way: "We're like the stock market. We've redirected our course. As an association we have cut our debt to zero. Now everything has a place and a purpose."

On the last day of the Expo, members gathered to discuss association business including a plan to change the fiscal year, the budget, the Hesch Fund, severing ties with the management company, show statistics, tobacco legislation, video content, Internet gaming legislation, the new dollar coin, officers, and membership.

Fiscal year and finances

Incoming first vice president Frank Seninsky explained the advantages of changing the fiscal year from a budgetary point of view. It's hard to plan when most of the revenue comes from

The Stansfield family and co-workers, standing, (l-r): Maxine O'Brien (WAMO), Jim and Marge Stansfield, Gary Nelson, and Jerry Lokken; seated, (l-r): Janet Stansfield Hess and Julie Stansfield.

The presidential gavel is passed from Don Hesch (l) of A.H. Entertainers to Jim Stansfield of Stansfield Vending

the show in the latter part of the year. "We need to make it so the board of directors can establish the fiscal year," he said. "It would be a headache if we ever shift our show dates."

Seninsky added that the association is in very good financial shape. "In the last two years we have put things in place to get more members, and we are going to run lean this year and the year after." In addition, he pointed out that the board is now selling ads for the membership directory. "The board has come forward and helped us tremendously," he concluded.

Government relations

One of the most expensive committees, government relations, previously chaired by incoming AMOA president Jim Stansfield, is now headed by Southeast Game Brokers' Rich Holley. "As you know," said Stansfield, "this can be the busiest and one of the most expensive committees. To its credit, we have not had any adverse legislation affecting our industry."

It was pointed out that AMOA has done some joint lobbying with AAMA this year on issues of mutual concern. Stansfield mentioned three valuable reports as major accomplishments: one from Wayne Valis & Associates in Washington, D.C., and two prepared by legal counsel Elliott Portnoy, especially the recently released comprehensive Parental Advisory System report.

Hesch Fund

The Hesch Scholarship Fund, named in honor of former AMOA president Wayne Hesch and brother of outgoing president Don Hesch, has raised millions of dollars and given away hundreds of scholarships. There is over $1 million in the Hesch Fund, Seninsky said.

Chris Warren of Capital Vending commented, "We're way ahead on contributions for the Hesch Fund. We set a record of about $69,000 just from exhibitors this year" (in donated equipment and merchandise).

Management

Incoming president Jim Stansfield discussed Smith, Bucklin, describing them as, "A management company that served us well." The association is moving to new offices, in the same building now housing the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA), and has hired a new executive vice president, Jack Kelleher, whom many got to meet during the three-day show. His official duties start Oct. 5.

Show data

Naturally, show statistics were on everyone's mind. Seninsky admitted that booth sales were down, but only slightly, he added. "We all know that through consolidation," Seninsky explained, "there are fewer companies. We still have a strong, strong support out there. Some 25 percent of our exhibitors were new." However, it was obvious that pre-show predictions were down. There were 550 booths, and AMOA estimated the head count at roughly 5,600.

Cigarette vending

Terry Davis of TD Rowe gave the group a synopsis of the tobacco legislation. Two years ago President Clinton wanted to ban all cigarette vending machines. "When we first went to Washington we wanted to change the proposed law and pursued lockout devices," Davis explained. "We told them that if they wanted to ban us, they should pay us. Once we agreed to be

"Don't wait for the association to give to you. The more you contribute, the more you receive."

From left: Ralph Ceraldi of C & C Vending, Rich Holley of Southeast Game Brokers, Chris Warren of Capital Music, and Howard Cole of Cole Vending.

Don Hesch (r) presents plaques to outgoing vice presidents Chris Warren of Capital Vending and Terry Davis (c) of TD Rowe Corp.

banned and compensated, we got cooperation. We spent $250,000 in the last two years on this issue. It was a grass roots effort."

"When faced with giving us money, Congress wrote the lockout device law," said Davis. He concluded that with all that's going on in Congress, it's unlikely that any action will be taken concerning tobacco.

Parental Advisory System

Rich Holley gave a video content report. He said that it was an issue not considered a very serious matter at first, but what happened in Florida this year (a move to ban anyone under 18 from entering an arcade) was an eye-opener for the whole industry. "The effort was put forth and the plan we have is a good one," he said. "It's another example of a grass roots effort. The agreement is to regulate our own games. If not, it will be done for us."

Legislation to monitor

Board member Mike Leonard addressed the group about a potentially harmful piece of legislation: the Internet Prohibition Gaming Act. The problem, he said, was that in order to regulate Internet gaming, wording was adopted that would have inadvertently affected networking amusement games like *Golden Tee 3D Golf.* "We were sold down the river—by happenstance!" Teaming with AAMA, the association is pulling together a coalition to address the problem. (See the "News Bulletin" on page 4 for more details.)

Dollar coin

Outgoing president Don Hesch gave an update on the status of the dollar coin, slated to be introduced in January 2000. "The good news," he said, "is we have one coming!" As he turned over the reins of the association to Stansfield, Hesch commented, "I thank everyone in this room, all the AMOA members, and my family. You are the people who have made my year as president of AMOA a success."

Words of wisdom

Craig Johnson of TATAKA accepted a plaque for his service on the Past Presidents' Council, and focused on a question he often hears: "What has AMOA done for me?" His response: "What I got came from my participation on the board. You will get out of a trade association, or any organization, what you want to get. You can't sit back at home and do nothing.

"I've been able to go one-on-one with some of the most brilliant and successful people in this business. I've been to Washington over 20 times to talk over issues. Through AMOA I've become close to my Senator. The past 15 years have been well worth it. Don't wait for the association to give to you. The more you contribute, the more you receive."

Officers and appointments

Incoming officers are: Jim Stansfield of Stansfield Vending, president; Frank Seninsky of Alpha-Omega, first vice president; Jim Hayes of Gem Vending, treasurer; and Lee Wesson of Peachtree Music & Amusements, secretary.

Terry Davis of TD Rowe Corp. completed his term as a vice president. Manley Lawson of Lawson Music Co. has been reappointed for a one-year term and Chris Warren of Capital Vending has been reappointed for a two-year term.

Three board members moving up to vice president are Marion Paul of Fannie Farkle's, Randy Flowe of Greenwood Music Co., and Mark Levine of Melo-Tone Vending.

Board member terms were up for Phil Elum of Elum Music Co., Ray Bynum Jr. of Bunky The Jukebox Man, John Estridge Jr. of Southern Games, Dave Waylander of Wyoming Amusement, John Newberry of Venco Amusement, and Dwight Wrangham of Dakota Gaming Supply. ▲

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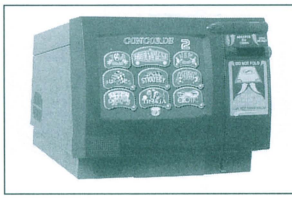

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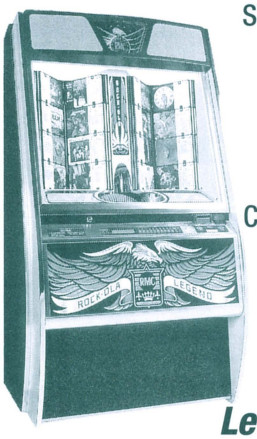

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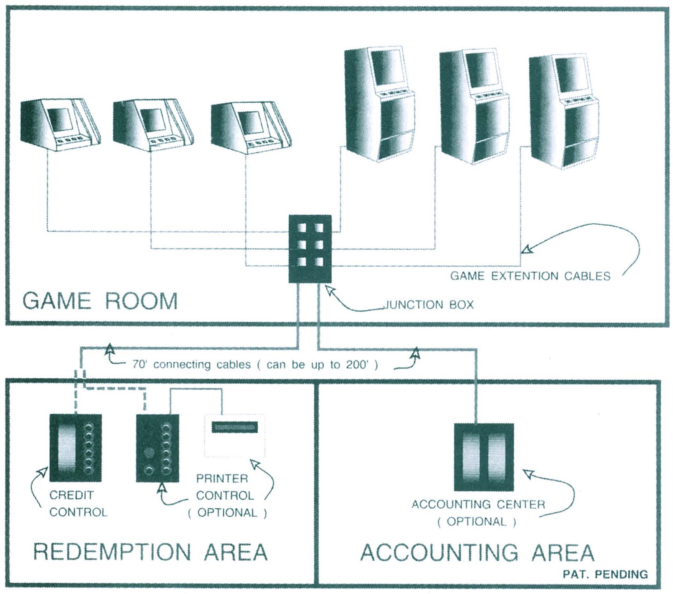

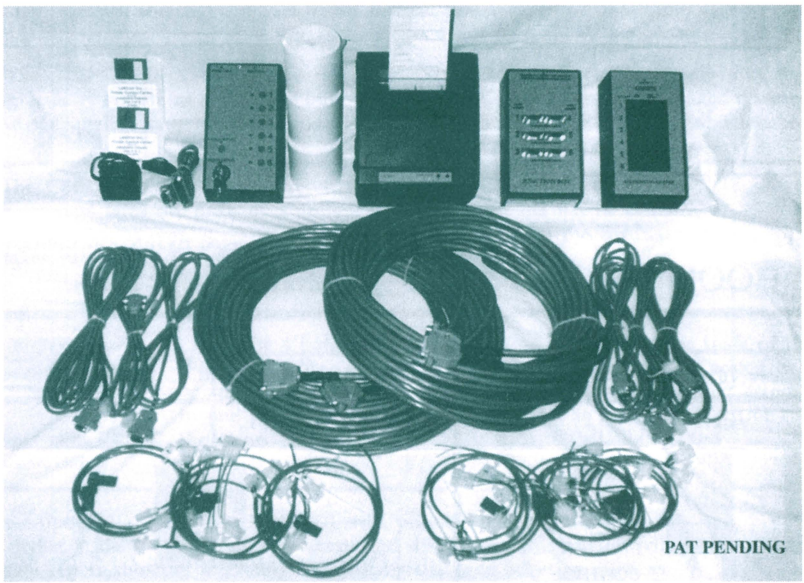

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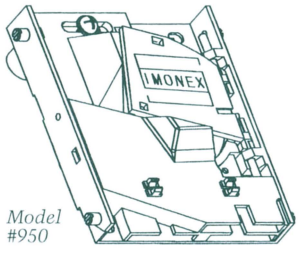

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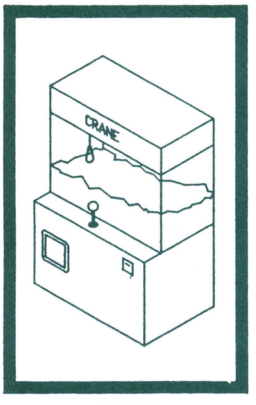
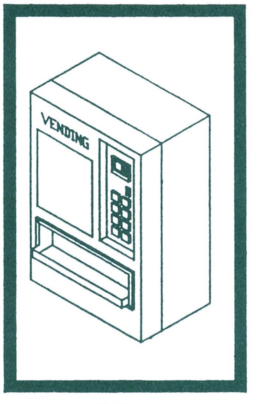
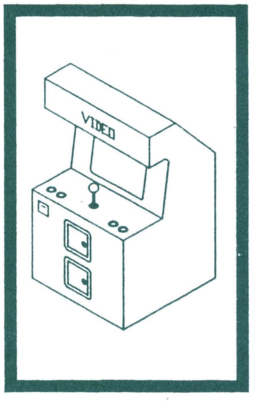


CRANE MACHINES



VENDING MACHINES



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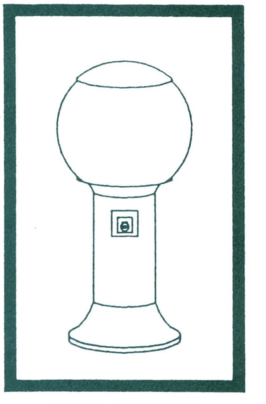

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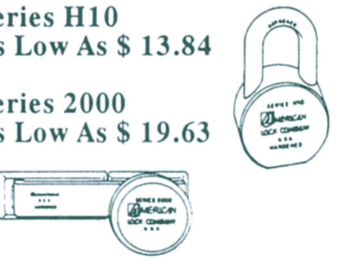

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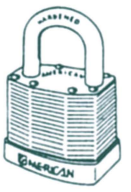

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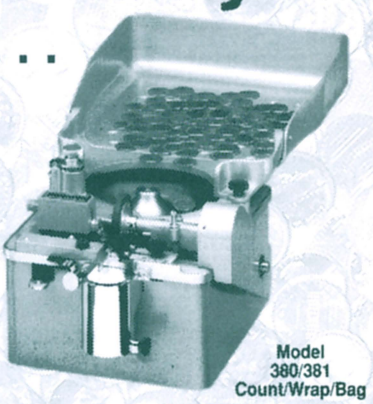

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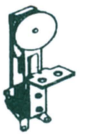

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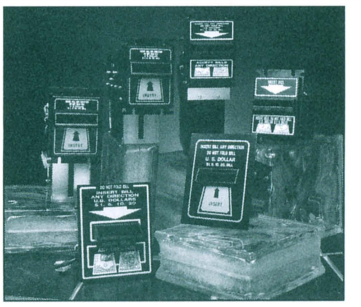

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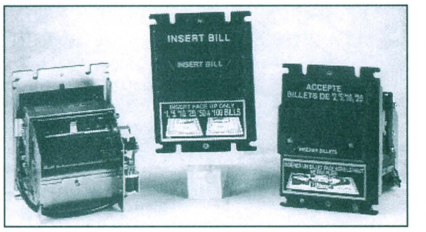

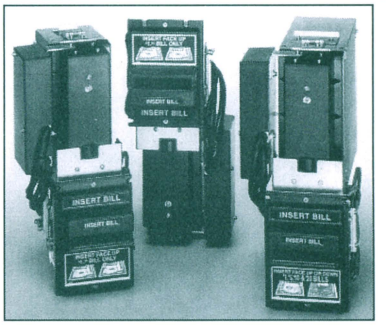

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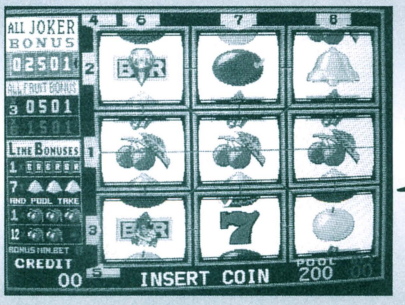

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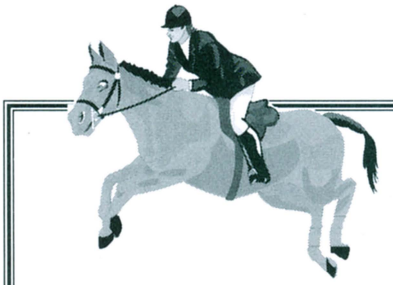

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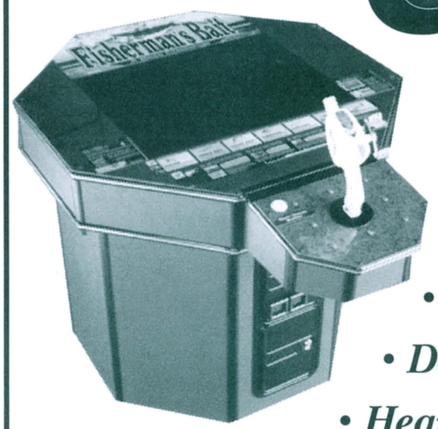

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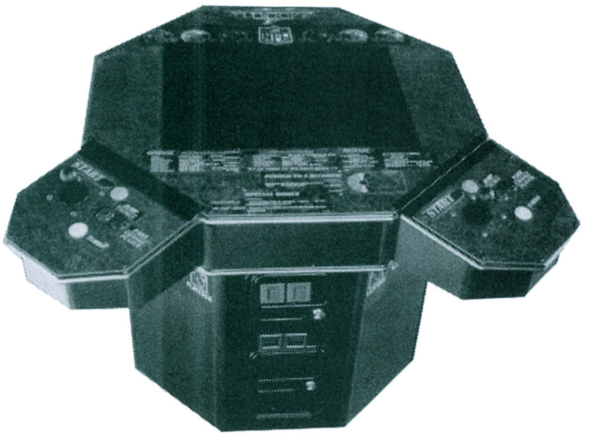

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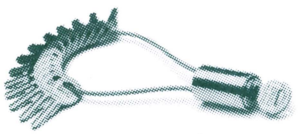

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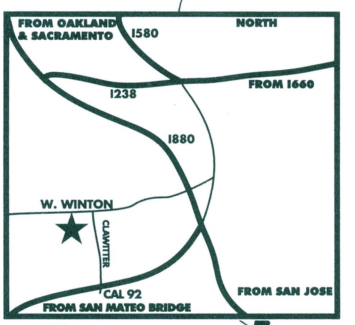

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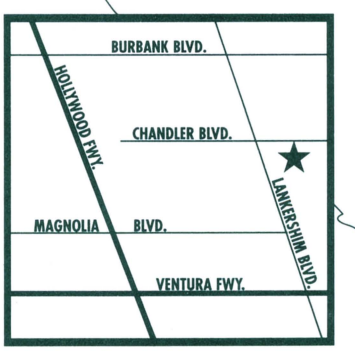

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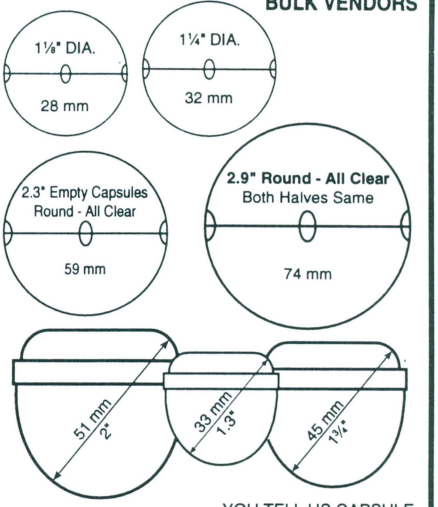

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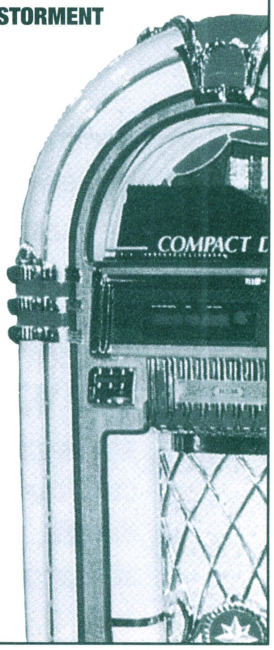

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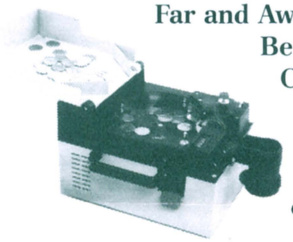

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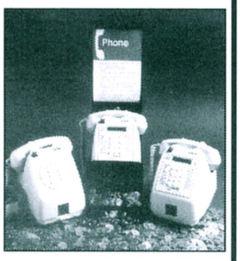

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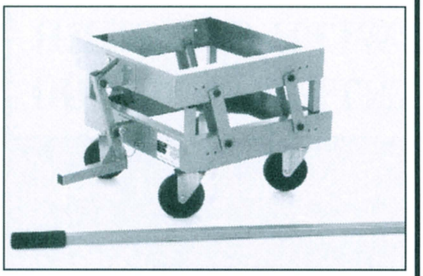

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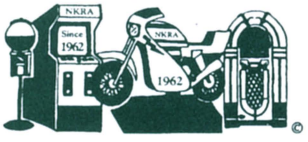

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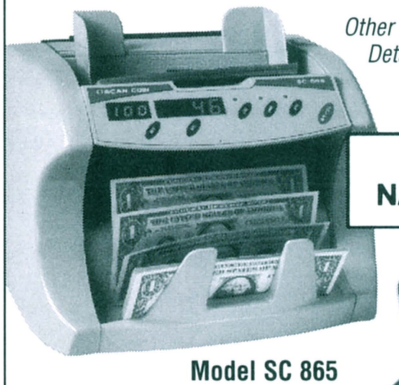

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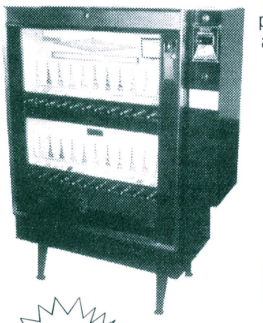

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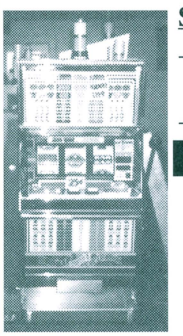

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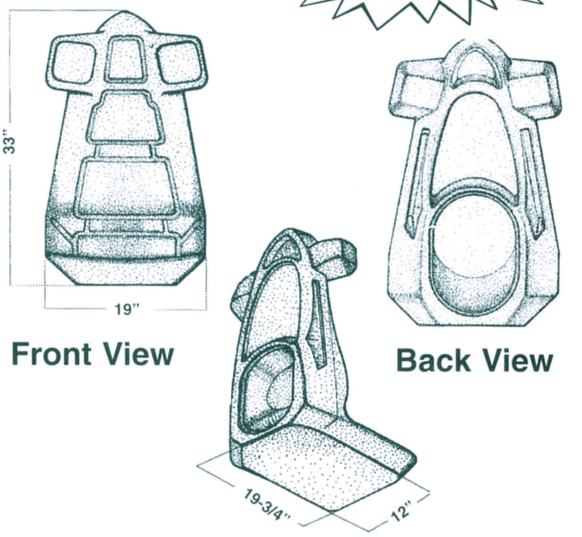

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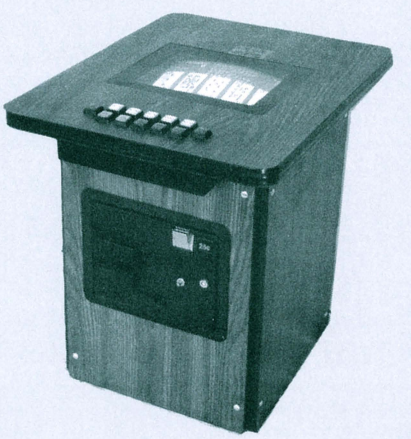

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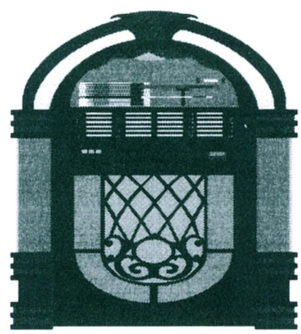

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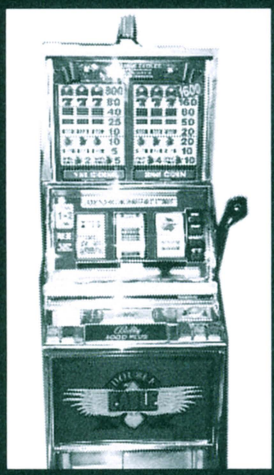

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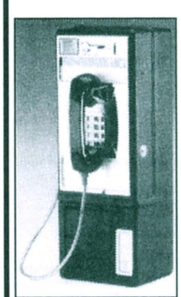

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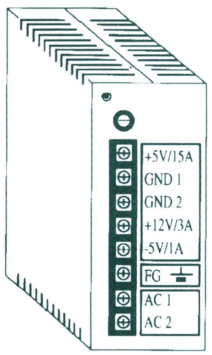

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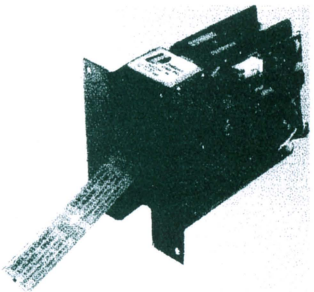

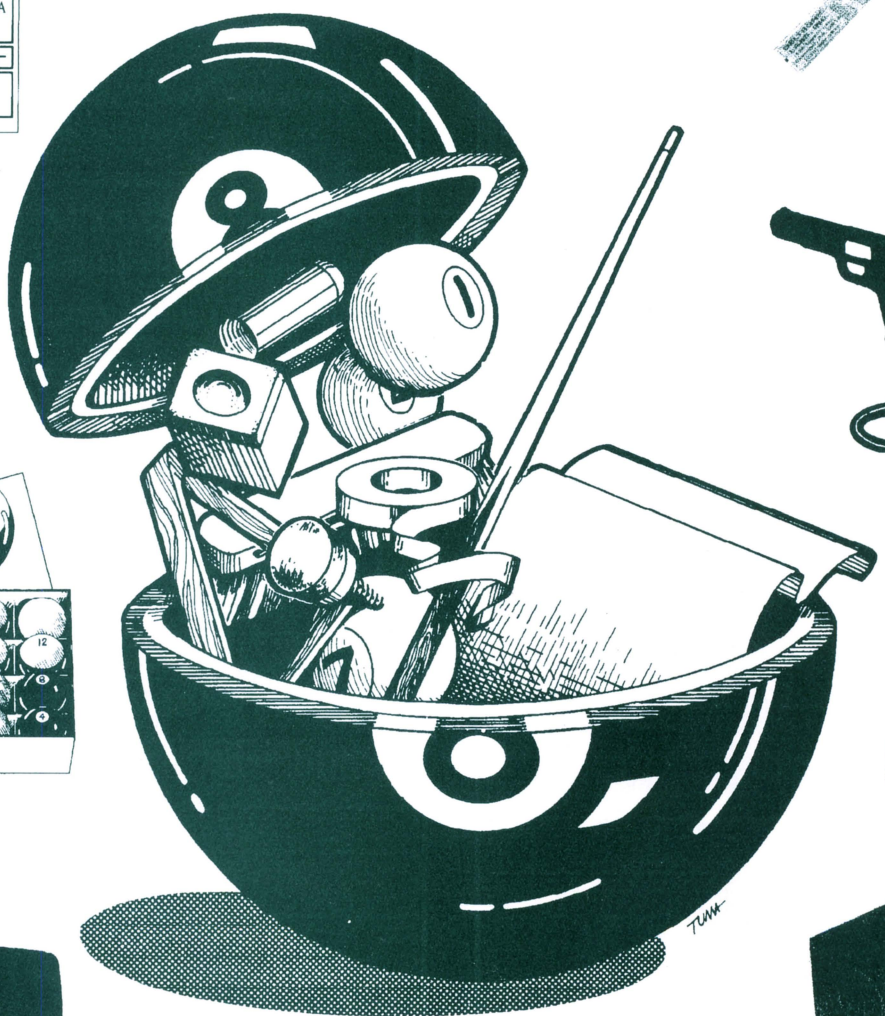

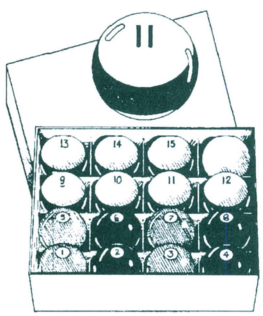

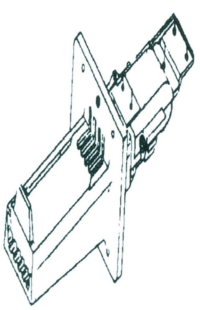

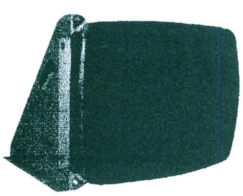

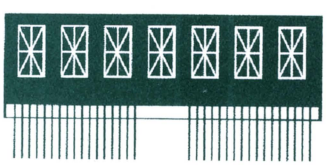

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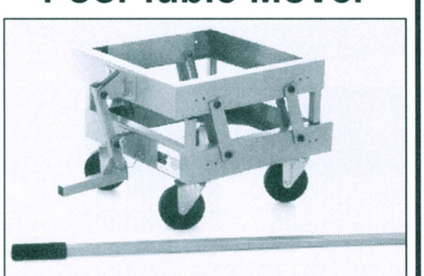

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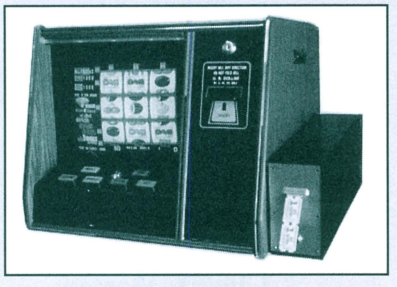

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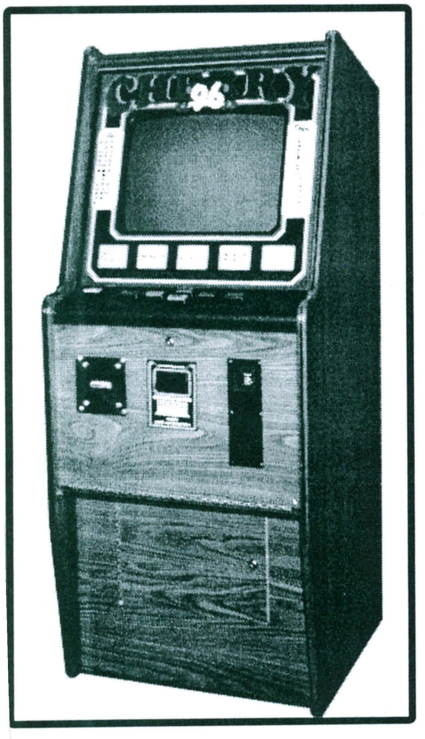

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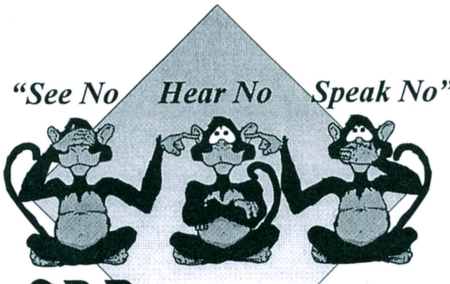

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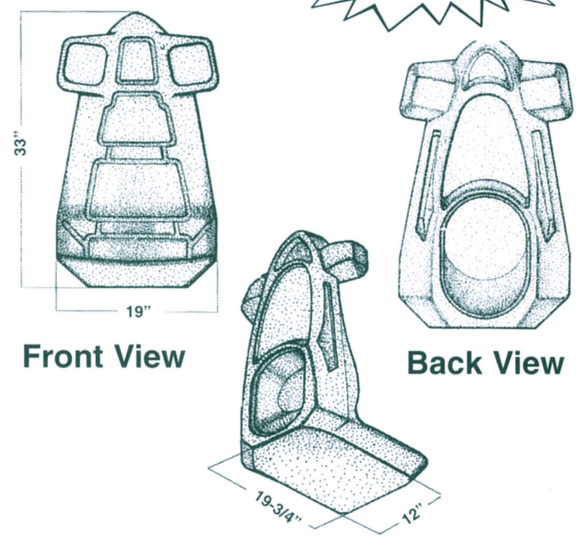

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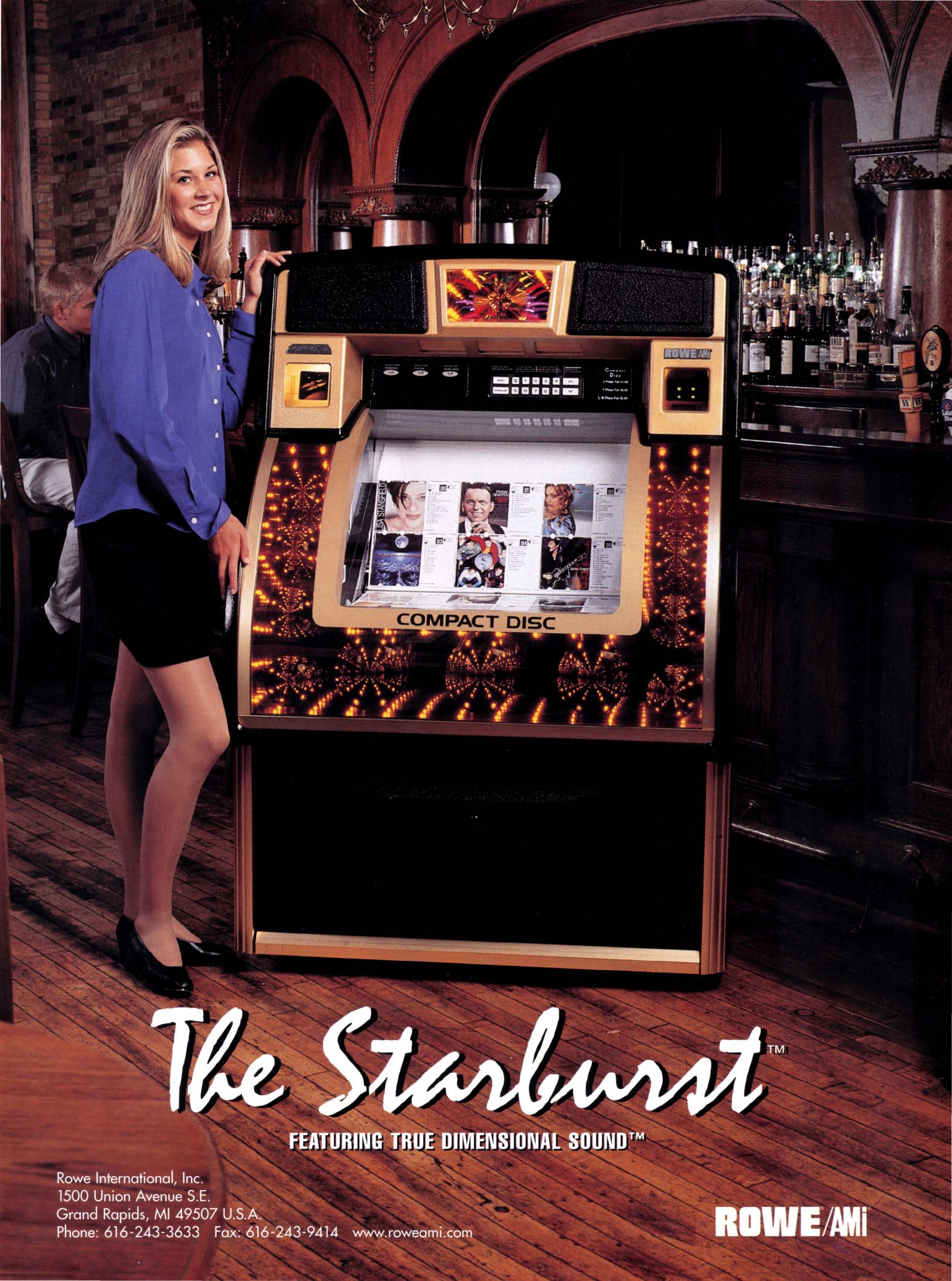

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